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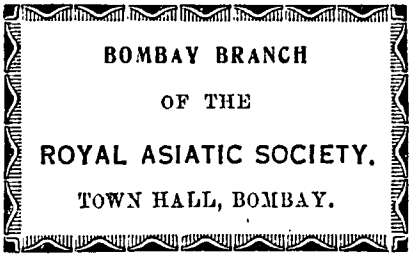

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BELGIUM

UNDER THE

GERMAN OCCUPATION

BELGIUM

UNDER THE
GERMAN OCCUPATION

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

By BRAND WHITLOCK
U.S. MINISTER IN BELGIUM

WITH PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR
BY FRANZ VAN HOLDER

Je l'ai vu, dis-je, vu, de mes propres yeux vu,
Ce qu'on appelle vu . . .

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VOLUME II

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN

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BELGIUM UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

I. EDITH CAVELL

WE were all a little saddened at Mr. Crosby's going, and I regretted my own inability to join in the ceremony at which the men of the C.N. and of the C.R.B. expressed their appreciation of the executive services he had rendered. I happened just then to be confined to my quarters, as the military men say, by the orders of my physician. The long strain had told on all of us, and worse than the strain was the almost intolerable depression, one with the atmosphere all about, that settled down like a black cloud. October had come, with all the signs of early autumn and the menace of another dark winter of war. The grey, dripping skies seemed but the reflection of the universal spirit of man. There were bitter rains and fogs that pinched the nose and clutched at the throat with cold fingers. Then, imprudently, I went out one afternoon in the rain, and that evening the good Dr. Derscheid came with his little thermometer and bundled me off to bed. . . .

The leaves were falling, and it remains as a part of the memory of that gloomy October that the apprentice of Le Jeune, the barber, had just told me that if "*le patron*" could survive "*la tombée des feuilles*" he might live until "*la poussée des feuilles.*" It was of some old superstition, I suppose, that he had this curious notion, and yet it seems in a way to express the feeling of all those suffering Belgians. They had felt for a while a mounting of their hope as the cannon preluded the great Allied offensive of that autumn, but after the guns had thundered in full orchestra all about the vast circle that stretched from the Yser to the Vosges they realized, even if they were too stubbornly courageous to admit it, that they were the victims of one more great dis-

appointment. The frequent publication on the walls of those sinister *affiches,* reporting the morning activities of the firing-squad, beat down the spirits; each day seemed to outdo its predecessor in some such dread news. General von Kraewel had been removed because, it was said, he had not been severe enough, and was succeeded as Chief of Staff and Militarv Governor of Brussels by General von Sauberzweig.

It was said that many German soldiers were deserting—the offensive was getting on their nerves; those brought back from Russia to face the fighting on the Western Front were half mad with terror. The Germans were beating the Forêt de Soignes for these deserters, and it was said that even officers were fleeing. One day the Rue du Commerce, in the Quartier Léopold, was closed and all the houses searched, because, so the wiseacres said, six officers were hiding there. It was even said that a man was shot for assisting some of them to escape.

Perhaps it was only the ordinary perquisition, the usual search for letters or incriminating documents, now grown more frequent than ever. At any rate, Brussels was nearer black despair than it ever had been. No one smiled, and the people only hoped on because they must; there was nothing else to do. And then a deed was done that threw its black and monstrous shadow not only over us, but over the whole world. It seemed, somehow, like the whelming doom that had been implicit in the dreadful events of that dark month, the *dénouement* toward which they had been so implacably tending; it was so in harmony with the atmosphere, the spirit and the feeling of the time. It was one of a thousand other injustices essentially as bad, but because it doomed in its tragic circumstances a noble woman of our own blood and tongue and tradition it wellnigh overwhelmed us with its horror.

Early in August Brussels had heard, and all Belgium—or at least all that part of Belgium that lived in châteaux—had heard, that the Princess Maria de Croy and the Countess Jeanne de Belleville had been arrested. The de Croys are one of the oldest families of the Belgian nobility, and the Princess Maria was a maiden lady who lived almost in seclusion in her château of Bellignies, near Mons. The Countess Jeanne de Belleville lived not far away, at her château of Montignies-sur-Roc, near

Andregnies, in the province of Hainaut. These two distinguished ladies had been arrested for having aided British soldiers to pass the Belgian frontier, and were accused of "treason in time of war." At the beginning of the war the Princess de Croy had established a Red Cross hospital in her château, where Belgian, English, and German wounded were cared for. After the Battle of Mons a great many British soldiers, cut off in the retreat, had been left behind in Belgium, and all through the winter and spring had lived the lives of hunted animals in the woods or in the farms and fields of Hainaut and of Brabant. Near the château of the Princess de Croy thirteen British soldiers had hidden in a haystack on a Belgian farm, and, tracked down at last by German soldiers, they were taken and shot without mercy. This so affected the Princess that she determined to organize a method whereby British soldiers, finding themselves in a position that in all civilized countries would have entitled them at least to the consideration shown to prisoners of war, could be cared for and if possible got out of the country. And, though frail and in delicate health, she and the Countess de Belleville and Mademoiselle Thuliez and certain others organized a system to aid those British soldiers who were still in hiding, and to send them to Brussels, where, as she declared in her interrogatory before the military tribunal, she thought they would be less rigorously dealt with than at Mons, which was under the military regime of the Etappengebiet. The Princess did not know what became of them after they reached Brussels; others aided them to get across the frontier into Holland.

One day in August it was learned at the Legation that an English nurse named Edith Cavell had been arrested by the Germans. I wrote a letter to the Baron von der Lancken to ask if it was true that Miss Cavell had been arrested, and saying that if it were I should request that Maître de Leval, the legal counsellor of the Legation, be permitted to see her and to prepare for her defence. There was no reply to this letter, and on September 10 I wrote a second letter, repeating the questions and the requests made in the first. On September 12 I had a reply from the Baron stating that Miss Cavell had been arrested on August 5, that she was confined in the prison of St.-Gilles, that she had admitted having hidden English and French soldiers

in her home as well as Belgians of an age to bear arms, all anxious to get to the front; that she had admitted also having furnished these soldiers with money to get to France, and had provided guides to enable them to cross the Dutch frontier; that the defence of Miss Cavell was in the hands of Maître Thomas Braun, and that inasmuch as the German Government, on principle, would not permit accused persons to have any interviews whatever, he could not obtain permission for Maître de Leval to visit Miss Cavell as long as she was in solitary confinement.*

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* BARON VON DER LANCKEN

BRUXELLES, *le* 31 *août* 1915.

EXCELLENCE,—Ma Légation vient d'être informée que Miss Edith Cavell, sujette anglaise habitant rue de la Culture à Bruxelles, aurait été arrêtée.

Je serais fort obligé a Votre Excellence si Elle voulait bien me faire savoir si ce renseignement est exact, et, dans l'affirmative, quelles sont les raisons de cette arrestation. Je lui saurais gré également dans ce cas de bien vouloir faire parvenir à la Légation l'autorisation nécessaire des autorités judiciares allemandes, pour que M. de Leval puisse conférer avec Miss Cavell, et éventuellement charger quelqu'un de sa défense.

Je saisis, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *August* 31, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—My Legation has just been informed that Miss Edith Cavell, a British subject residing in the Rue de la Culture, Brussels, is said to have been arrested.

I should be greatly obliged if Your Excellency would be good enough to let me know whether this report is true, and, if so, the reasons for her arrest. I should also be grateful in that case if Your Excellency would furnish this Legation with the necessary authorization from the German judicial authorities so that M. de Leval may consult with Miss Cavell, and eventually entrust some one with her defence.

I avail, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* BARON VON DER LANCKEN

Le Ministre d'Amérique présente ses compliments à Son Excellence M. le Baron von der Lancken, et a l'honneur de lui rappeler sa lettre du 31 août concernant l'arrestation de Miss Cavell, lettre à laquelle il n'a pas encore reçu de réponse.

Comme le Ministre a été, par dépêche, prié de s'occuper aussitôt de la défence de Miss Cavell, il serait fort obligé à Son Excellence M. le Baron von der Lancken de bien vouloir le mettre à même de prendre immédiatement les mesures éventuellement nécessaires pour cette défense, et de répondre par télégramme à la dépêche qu'il a reçue.

BRUXELLES, *le* 10 *septembre* 1915.

Translation

The American Minister presents his compliments to the Baron von der Lancken, and has the honour to draw His Excellency's attention to his letter

We at the Legation had not at the time seen anything more serious in the case than in the numerous other cases that were similarly brought to our notice, or of which we were constantly hearing. It was the German practice in Belgium to arrest any one " on suspicion," as we should say in America, and to investigate the facts afterward. Under the German system in vogue in Belgium, as Maître Théodor had not feared some months before to point out to the authorities, persons who were arrested were not told of the offence with which they were charged, nor were the offences themselves clearly defined; so that Miss Cavell,

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of August 31 respecting the arrest of Miss Cavell, to which no reply has yet been received.

As the Minister has been requested by telegraph to take charge of Miss Cavell's defence without delay, he would be greatly obliged if Baron von der Lancken would enable him to take forthwith such steps as may be necessary for this defence, and to answer by telegraph the dispatch he has received.

BRUSSELS, *September* 10, 1915.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *September* 21, 1915.

SIR,—Referring to your telegram of August 27 in regard to the case of Miss Edith Cavell, who was arrested on August 5 and is now in the military prison at St.-Gilles, I beg to enclose herewith for your information a copy of a communication which I have just received from Baron von der Lancken in regard to the matter.

The legal adviser appointed to defend Miss Cavell has informed the Legation that she has indeed admitted having hidden in her house English and French soldiers, and has facilitated the departure of Belgian subjects to the front, furnishing them money and guides to enable them to cross the Dutch frontier.

The Legation will, of course, keep this case in view and endeavour to see that a fair trial is given Miss Cavell, and will not fail to let you know of any developments.

I have, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

BARON VON DER LANCKEN *to* MR. WHITLOCK

POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG BEI DEM GENERAL-GOUVERNEUR IN BELGIEN

I. 6940 BRUXELLES, *le* 12 *septembre* 1915.

M. LE MINISTRE,—En réponse à la note que Votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser en date du 31 du mois dernier, j'ai l'honneur de porter à sa connaissance que Miss Edith Cavell a été arrêtée le 5 août et qu'elle se trouve actuellement dans la prison militaire de St.-Gilles.

Elle a avoué elle-même avoir caché dans sa demeure des soldats anglais et français, ainsi que des Belges en âge de porter les armes, tous désireux de se rendre au front. Elle a avoué également avoir fournir à ces soldats l'argent nécessaire pour faire le voyage en France et avoir facilité leur sortie de Belgique en leur procurant des guides qui les faisaient franchir clandestinement la frontière néerlandaise.

La défense de Miss Cavell est entre les mains de l'avocat Braun, qui du reste s'est déjà mis en rapport avec les autorités allemandes compétentes.

Attendu que le Gouvernment général pour des raisons de principe n'admet

like many another who has shared her fate, was arrested and held in prison while the secret police continued their investigations and made up the dossier which would reveal its secrets only before a military court, that was at once prosecutor, jury, and judge.

For one of our Anglo-Saxon race and legal traditions to understand conditions in Belgium during the German occupation it is necessary to banish resolutely from the mind every conception of right that we have inherited from our ancestors—conceptions long since crystallized into immutable principles of law and confirmed in our charters of liberty. In the German mentality these conceptions do not exist: the Germans think in other sequences, they act according to another principle, if it is a principle—the conviction that there is only one right, one privilege, and that it belongs exclusively to Germany; the right, namely, to do whatever they have the physical force to do. These so-called courts, of whose arbitrary and irresponsible and brutal nature I have tried to give some notion, were mere inquisitorial

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pas que les prévenus aient des entretiens quels qu'ils soient, je regrette infiniment de ne pouvoir procurer à M. de Leval la permission d'aller voir Miss Cavell tant qu'elle est au secret.

Je profite, etc. LANCKEN.

Translation

SIR,—In reply to Your Excellency's note of the 31st ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that Miss Edith Cavell was arrested on August 5, and that she is at present in the military prison at St.-Gilles.

She has herself admitted that she concealed in her house French and English soldiers, as well as Belgians of military age, all desirous of proceeding to the front. She has also admitted having furnished these soldiers with the money necessary for their journey to France, and having facilitated their departure from Belgium by providing them with guides who enabled them secretly to cross the Dutch frontier.

Miss Cavell's defence is in the hands of the advocate Braun, who, I may add, is already in touch with the competent German authorities.

In view of the fact that the General Government as a matter of principle does not allow accused persons to have any interviews whatever, I much regret my inability to procure for M. de Leval permission to visit Miss Cavell as long as she is in solitary confinement.

I avail, etc. LANCKEN.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 9, 1915.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of September 23 in regard to the arrest by the German military authorities of Miss Edith Cavell, head of a training school for nurses.

Upon receipt of your telegram of August 27 I took the matter up with the

bodies, guided by no principle save that inherent in their own bloody nature; they did as they pleased, and would have scorned a Jeffreys as too lenient, a Lynch as too formal, a Spanish *auto de fé* as too technical, and a tribunal of the French Revolution as soft and sentimental. Before them the accused had literally no rights; he could not even, as a right, present a defence, and if he was permitted to speak in his own behalf it was only as a generous and liberal favour.

Long months before, a clergyman, an American citizen, had been arrested and held for several days at the Kommandantur without the knowledge of any one at the Legation; the fact came to our knowledge only accidentally. I was able to secure the liberation of this American, however, and then I asked the Politische Abteilung to notify me and to permit me to present a defence whenever any American citizen, or a citizen of any country whose interests were confided to my care, was arrested. The Politische Abteilung agreed to this, but we usually learned of such incidents before the Politische Abteilung could notify us, and provided a lawyer to look after the interests of the accused, so far as it was possible to do that before a German military

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German authorities, and learned that Miss Cavell had indeed been arrested upon a charge of "espionage." The Belgian attorney appointed to defend her before the court martial called several times at the Legation, and will continue to keep me well posted in regard to the case. It seems that Miss Cavell has made several very damaging admissions, and there appeared to be no ground upon which I could ask for her release before the trial.

The case will come up for trial next week, and I shall write you as soon as there is any further development.

I am, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 11, 1915.

SIR,—Referring to my letter of October 9 in regard to the case of Miss Edith Cavell, I hasten to send you word that her trial has been completed, and that the German prosecutor has asked for sentence of death against her and eight other persons implicated by her testimony. Sentence has not yet been pronounced, and I have some hope that the court martial may decline to pass the rigorous sentence proposed.

I have thus far done everything that has been possible to secure a fair trial for Miss Cavell, and am assured by her attorney that no complaint can be made on this score.

I feel that it would be useless to take any action until sentence is pronounced. I shall then, of course, neglect no effort to prevent an unduly severe penalty being inflicted upon her. I shall immediately telegraph you upon the pronouncement of sentence.

I have, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

court martial. The defence, as I have just said, was not a defence in our meaning of the word. The lawyer was not allowed to see his client until he appeared to plead the case before the court where the accused was arraigned for trial, and he was not permitted to speak to his client during the trial; often he did not know what the accusation was until the trial began, and sometimes he did not know it even then. There were no written charges and no specifications, much less an indictment or information. The secret police would bring before the bench of German officers sitting there in the Senate chamber all the evidence, as they called it, that they had been able to collect, and present it as they pleased, with no concern as to its pertinence or relevancy. The court would admit hearsay, presumptions, conclusions, inferences, and innuendoes so long as they were on behalf of the prosecution; there was no cross-examination, sometimes even no interrogatory on the part of the presiding judge. The accused was sometimes allowed to present a defence, but it was generally only such as he might contrive in sparring with the judges as they questioned him. He had no process for witnesses in his own behalf, and no right to have them heard even when they were willing to appear.

After the evidence was in, the officer, a kind of judge-advocate, who acted as prosecutor, would state the penalty that he thought applicable, and the court would vote to apply it. The lawyer for the defence, after having gone through the case without any possibility of preparation, without even having spoken to his client before or during the trial, and with no admitted principles to guide him, without the right to present testimony in rebuttal, would be allowed to make a statement or an argument. But, as though he were not already labouring under a disadvantage sufficiently heavy, he must be careful in his argument not to say anything that would reflect in the least on one of the witnesses, especially if the witness happened to be a German soldier, or even a German civilian; he must not contradict a judge-advocate or question the validity or propriety of any act of the prosecution, for this would be equivalent to contempt of court and amount to the heinous offence of failing in respect to the German army. He must show the most exquisite and exaggerated respect for the court, and as a result he could only

stand there niddy-noddying, pale with fear, and—say nothing. In a word, even when the judgments of those extraordinary tribunals reflected a kind of natural justice, which perhaps they did on occasion, the whole proceeding was the veriest travesty and mockery. The judges could be swayed by any passion, any prejudice, any whim, and when the accused happened to be some one who had offended the secret police or *Messieurs les militaires* the judgment was a foregone conclusion—unless he was a personage, especially a titled personage, and then he was apt to be shown a snobbish consideration.

It was before such a court that Edith Cavell was to be arraigned. I had asked Maître de Leval to provide for her defence, and on his advice, inasmuch as Maître Thomas Braun was already counsel in the case, chosen by certain friends of Miss Cavell, I invited Maître Braun into consultation. Maître Braun was a Belgian lawyer of standing and ability; his father was defending the most distinguished of the accused, the Princess de Croy. He was a man thoroughly equipped, who had the advantage of knowing German as well as he knew French, and had appeared constantly and not without success before the German tribunals. I asked Maître Braun to appear, then, for Miss Cavell, representing the American Legation.

It was supposed at first that the case was no more likely to result in tragedy than the generality of cases brought before such tribunals; that is, that it was one of those numerous cases in which Belgians were being condemned to deportation to some German prison, like Madame Carton de Wiart or Maître Théodor, to mention the most celebrated, or if one were to consider the cases of those less prominent, the many convictions and sentences to imprisonment for terms of years—two or ten or twenty. They all amounted to the same thing, those terms of imprisonment, for the victims would be freed at the conclusion of peace if they lived, and if peace were ever concluded.

It was not until weeks had passed that we heard that the charges to be brought against Miss Cavell were serious, but still we were in mystery; all we could learn was that "the instruction was proceeding," and that things were taking their course. Then we were told that the offence with which she would be charged was that of aiding young men to cross the Dutch frontier.

I think that we were somewhat relieved; such cases were common, and the sentences provided in them were not in general severe, according to the standard of those in vogue in occupied Belgium.

Edith Cavell herself did not expect such a fate. She was a frail and delicate little woman about forty years of age. She had come to Brussels some years before to exercise her calling as a trained nurse, and soon became known to the leading physicians of the capital and nursed in the homes of the leading families. But she was ambitious and devoted to her profession, and ere long had entered a nursing-home in the Rue de la Clinique, where she organized for Dr. Depage a training school for nurses. She was a woman of refinement and education; she knew French well; she was deeply religious, with a conscience almost Puritan, and was very stern with herself in what she conceived to be her duty. In her training school she showed great executive ability, was firm in matters of discipline, and brought it to a high state of efficiency. And every one who knew her in Brussels spoke of her with that unvarying respect which her noble character inspired.

Some time before the trial Maître Braun informed the Legation that the Germans had forbidden him to plead before the military court and that some one else would have to appear for Miss Cavell; he suggested Maître Sadi Kirschen, who was engaged. I had thought of asking to have Maître de Leval attend, but on second thought, and on the advice of Maître Sadi Kirschen, as well as that of Maître de Leval himself, I came to the conclusion that perhaps it would not be entirely tactful to do this, for the presence of Maître de Leval as an observer might suggest to the hypersensitive suspicions of the Germans a lack of confidence that could only react against Miss Cavell.

It was the morning of Thursday, October 7, that the case came on before the court martial * in the Senate chamber where

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M. DE LEVAL *to* M. KIRSCHEN

BRUXELLES, *le 5 octobre* 1915.

M. L'AVOCAT,—Je vous remercie pour la lettre que vous avez bien voulu adresser à M. de Leval l'informant que l'affaire de Miss Cavell viendrait devant le conseil de guerre jeudi prochain à 8 heures du matin. Ainsi qu'il a été convenu, je vous serais fort obligé si vous vouliez bien, après l'audience, m'envoyer un mémorandum exposant les faits pour lesquels Miss Cavell est poursuivie, et

the military trials always took place, and Miss Cavell was arraigned with the Princess de Croy, the Countess de Belleville, and thirty-two others. The accused were seated in a circle facing the court in such a way that they could neither see nor communicate with their own counsel, who were compelled to sit behind them. Nor could they see the witnesses, who were also placed behind them.

The charge brought against the accused was that of having conspired to violate the German Military Penal Code, punishing with death those who conduct troops to the enemy. Its basis in German military law is found in paragraph 68 of the German Code, which says:

> Whoever, with the intention of helping the hostile Power, or of injuring the German or allied troops, is guilty of one of the crimes of paragraph 90 of the German Penal Code, will be sentenced to death for treason.

Among the crimes mentioned in paragraph 90 is that of "conducting soldiers to the enemy" (*dem Feinde Mannschaften zuführt*).

We have no record of that trial; we do not know all that occurred there behind the closed doors of that Senate chamber, where for four-score years laws based on another and more enlightened principle of justice had been discussed and enacted. The lips of the lawyers who were there, and of the accused—those among the thirty-five who were acquitted—have not been unsealed, and will not be until the little land is released from the terror that daily enacts such scenes. Miss Cavell did not

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indiquant les charges qui se seront révélées contre elle à l'audience ainsi que la sentence qui aura été prononcée.

Veuillez, etc.

(Pour le Ministre)
G. DE LEVAL, *Conseiller légiste de la Légation.*

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 5, 1915.

SIR,—I thank you for the letter you were good enough to address to M. de Leval informing him that Miss Cavell's case would come before the court martial at 8 a.m. next Thursday. In pursuance of the arrangement already made I should be most grateful if you would be good enough to send me, after the hearing, a memorandum setting forth the acts for which Miss Cavell is being prosecuted, and stating the charges brought against her at the hearing, and also the sentence passed.

I am, etc.

(For the Minister)
G. DE LEVAL, *Legal Adviser to the Legation.*

know, or knew only in the vaguest manner, the offence with which she was charged. No written statement of it had ever been delivered to her, no written statement of it had ever been given to her attorney, and it is a pathetic circumstance that it was her own honesty and frankness, her own direct English way of thinking, that convicted her. With the *naïveté* of the pure in heart she assumed that the Germans were charging her with the deeds that she had committed, and these she readily admitted, and even signed a paper to that effect. We know enough to be able to say that Miss Cavell did not deny having received at her hospital English soldiers, whom she nursed and to whom she gave money; she did not deny that she knew they were going to try to cross the border into Holland. She even took a patriotic pride in the fact. She was interrogated in German, a language she did not understand, but the questions and responses were translated into French. Her mind was alert, she was entirely calm and self-possessed, and frequently rectified inexact details in the statements that were put to her. When, in her interrogatory, she was asked if she had not aided English soldiers left behind after the early battles of the preceding autumn about Mons and Charleroi, she said yes; they were English and she was English, and she would help her own. The answer seemed to impress the court. They asked her if she had not helped twenty.

"Yes," she said, "more than twenty; two hundred."

"English?"

"No, not all English; French and Belgians too."

But the French and Belgians were not of her own nationality, said the judge—and that made a serious difference. She was subjected to a nagging interrogatory. One of the judges said that she had been foolish to aid English soldiers, because the English are ungrateful.

"No," replied Miss Cavell, "the English are not ungrateful."

"How do you know they are not?" asked the inquisitor.

"Because," she answered, "some of them have written to me from England to thank me."

It was a fatal admission on the part of the tortured little woman; under the German military law her having helped soldiers to reach Holland, a neutral country, would have been

a less serious offence, but to aid them to reach an enemy country, and especially England, was the last offence in the eyes of a German military court.

The trial was concluded on Friday, and on Sunday one of the nurses in Miss Cavell's school came to say that there was a rumour about town that the prosecuting officer had asked the court to pronounce a sentence of death on the Princess de Croy, the Countess de Belleville, Miss Cavell, and several others. The court had not as yet pronounced judgment, however, and there was some hope—or in the tribunals before which Maître de Leval and I were used to practise there would have been some hope—that the court would not pronounce the judgment proposed. I remember to have said to Maître de Leval, when he came up to my chamber to report this astounding news:

"That's only the usual exaggeration of the prosecutor; they all ask for the extreme penalty, everywhere, when they sum up their cases."

"Yes," said Maître de Leval, "and in German courts they always get it."

Maître de Leval sent a note to Maître Kirschen asking him to come on Monday at 8.30 o'clock to the Legation, or to send word regarding Miss Cavell. Maître Kirschen did not send Maître de Leval the word he had requested, and on that Sunday de Leval saw another lawyer who had been in the case and could tell him what had taken place at the trial. This lawyer thought that the court martial would not condemn Miss Cavell to death. At any rate, no judgment had been pronounced and the judges themselves did not appear to be in agreement. On Monday, October 11, at 8.30 in the morning, Maître de Leval went to the Politische Abteilung in the Rue Lambermont, and found Conrad. He spoke to him of the case of Miss Cavell and asked that, now that the trial had taken place, he and the Reverend Mr. H. Stirling T. Gahan, the British chaplain at Brussels and rector of the English church, be allowed to see Miss Cavell. Conrad said he would make inquiries and inform de Leval by telephone, and by one of the messengers of the Legation who that morning happened to deliver some papers to the Politische Abteilung Conrad sent word that neither the Reverend Mr. Gahan nor

Maître de Leval could see Miss Cavell at that time, but that Maître de Leval could see her as soon as the judgment had been pronounced. At 11.30 o'clock on that Monday morning Maître de Leval himself telephoned to Conrad, who repeated this statement. The judgment had not yet been rendered, he said, and Maître de Leval asked Conrad to inform him as soon as the judgment was pronounced, so that he might go to see Miss Cavell. Conrad promised this, but added that even then the Reverend Mr. Gahan could not see her because there were German pastors at the prison, and that if Miss Cavell needed spiritual advice or consolation she could call on them. Conrad concluded this conversation by saying that the judgment would be rendered probably on the morrow—that is, on Tuesday—or the day after, and that even when it had been pronounced it would have to be signed by the Military Governor before it was effective and that the Legation would be kept informed.

Maître de Leval is one of the most meticulously exact men that I ever knew. The instant he had an important conversation of any sort he used to dictate the purport of it to a stenographer, and thus he always had a record of everything—the date, the hour, precisely what was said and done. In preparing this account I have had the benefit of a glance at Maître de Leval's own notes. Shortly after noon on that Monday, not having received any news from Maître Kirschen, Maître de Leval went to his house, but did not find him there and left his card. He then went to the house of the lawyer to whom reference has already been made and left word for him to call at his house. At four o'clock that afternoon the lawyer went to Maître de Leval and said that he had gone to see the Germans at eleven o'clock, and that there he had been told that no judgment would be pronounced before the following day. On leaving the Legation to go home Maître de Leval told all that had happened to Gibson, and asked him to telephone again to Conrad before going home himself.

Thus at intervals all day long the inquiry had been repeated, and the same response made. Monday evening, at 6.20 o'clock Belgian time, Topping, one of the clerks of the Legation, with Gibson standing by, again called Conrad on the telephone, again

was told that the judgment had not been pronounced and that the Political Department would not fail to inform the Legation the moment the judgment was confirmed. And then the Chancellery was closed for the night.

II. THE NIGHT OF THE EXECUTION

AT nine o'clock that Monday evening Maître de Leval appeared suddenly at the door of my chamber; his face was deathly pallid. He said that he had just heard from the nurses who were keeping him informed, that the judgment had been confirmed and that the sentence of death had been pronounced on Miss Cavell at half-past four that afternoon, and that she was to be shot at two o'clock the next morning. It seemed impossible, especially the immediate execution of sentence; there had always been time at least to prepare and to present a plea for mercy. To condemn a woman in the evening and then to hurry her out to be shot before another dawn! Preposterous!

But no; Maître de Leval was certain. That evening he had gone home and was writing at his table when, about eight o'clock, two nurses were introduced. One was Miss Wilkison, "*petite et nerveuse, toute en larmes,*" the other "*plus grande et plus calme.*" Miss Wilkison said that she had just learned that the court had condemned Miss Cavell to death, that the judgment had been read to her in the cell of the prison at four-thirty that afternoon, and that the Germans were going to shoot her that night at two o'clock. Maître de Leval told her that it was difficult to believe such news since twice he had been told that the judgment had not been rendered and would not be rendered before the following day, but on her reiterating that she had this news from a source that was indisputable de Leval left at once with her and her friend, and came to the Legation. And there he stood, pale and shaken. Even then I could not believe—it was too preposterous; surely a stay of execution would be granted. Already in the afternoon, in some premonition, Maître de Leval had prepared for my signature a *recours en grâce* to be submitted to the Governor-General, and a letter of transmittal to present to the Baron von der Lancken. I asked Maître de Leval to bring

me these documents, and signed them*; then at the last minute, on the letter addressed to Von der Lancken, I wrote these words:

MON CHER BARON,—Je suis trop malade pour vous présenter ma requête moi-meme, mais je fais appel à votre générosité de cœur pour l'appuyer et sauver de la mort cette malheureuse. Ayez pitié d'elle!

Votre bien dévoué, BRAND WHITLOCK.†

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* MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* BARON VON BISSING, Governor-General in Belgium.

BRUXELLES, *le* 11 *octobre* 1915.

EXCELLENCE,—Je viens d'apprendre que Miss Cavell, sujette anglaise, et par conséquent sous la protection de ma Légation, a été condamnée à mort ce matin par le conseil de guerre.

Sans examiner les causes qui ont motivé une condamnation aussi sévère, et qui, si les renseignements qu'on me donne sont exacts, est plus sévère dans le cas actuel que dans tous les autres cas de même espèce qui ont été jugés par le même tribunal, je crois pouvoir faire appel aux sentiments d'humanité et de générosité de Votre Excellence en faveur de Miss Cavell, afin que la peine de mort prononcée contre elle soit commuée et que cette malheureuse femme ne soit pas passée par les armes.

Miss Cavell en effet est la principale nurse de l'Institut chirurgical de Bruxelles. Elle a passé sa vie à soigner la souffrance des autres, et, à son école, se sont formées de nombreuses infirmières qui ont, dans le monde entier, en Allemagne comme en Belgique, veillé au chevet des malades. Au début de la guerre Miss Cavell a prodigué ses soins aux soldats allemands comme aux autres. A défaut d'autres raisons, sa carrière humanitaire est de nature à inspirer toutes les pitiés et à promouvoir tous les pardons. Si les informations qui me sont données sont exactes, Miss Cavell, loin de se cacher, a, avec une louable franchise, avoué tous les faits qui étaient à sa charge, et ce seraient même des renseignements fournis par elle seule, et qu'elle seule pouvait fournir, qui ont causé l'aggravation de la peine prononcée contre elle.

C'est donc avec confiance, et avec l'espoir de la voir favorablement accueillie, que j'ai l'honneur de présenter à Votre Excellence ma requête en grâce en faveur de Miss Cavell.

Je saisis, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 11, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I have just heard that Miss Cavell, a British subject and consequently under the protection of my Legation, was this morning condemned to death by court martial.

If my information is correct, the judgment in the present case is more severe than all the others that have been passed in similar cases tried by the same court, and, without going into the reasons for such a drastic sentence, I feel that I can appeal to Your Excellency's feelings of humanity and generosity in

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† *Translation:*

MY DEAR BARON,—I am too ill to present my request to you in person, but I appeal to the generosity of your heart to support it and to save this unfortunate woman from death. Have pity on her!

Yours sincerely, BRAND WHITLOCK.

I told Maître de Leval to send Joseph at once to hunt up Gibson to present the plea, and if possible to find the Marquis de Villalobar and to ask him to support it with the Baron von der Lancken. Gibson was dining somewhere; we did not know where Villalobar was. The Politische Abteilung, the Ministry of Industry, where Baron von der Lancken lived, was only half a dozen blocks away. The Governor-General was in his château at Trois-Fontaines, ten miles away, playing bridge that evening. Maître de Leval went. . . .

The nurses from Miss Cavell's school were waiting in a lower room. Other nurses came for news; they too had heard, but

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Miss Cavell's favour, and to ask that the death penalty passed on Miss Cavell be commuted, and that this unfortunate woman be not executed.

Miss Cavell is the head nurse of the Brussels Surgical Institute. She has spent her life in alleviating the sufferings of others, and her school has sent forth nurses who have watched at the bedside of the sick all the world over, in Germany as in Belgium. At the beginning of the war Miss Cavell bestowed her care as freely on the German soldiers as on others. Even in default of all other reasons her career as a servant of humanity is such as to inspire the greatest sympathy and to call for pardon. If the information in my possession is correct, Miss Cavell, far from shielding herself, has, with commendable straightforwardness, admitted the truth of all the charges against her, and it is the very information which she herself has furnished and which she alone was in a position to furnish, that has aggravated the severity of the sentence passed against her.

It is then with confidence and in the hope of its favourable reception that I have the honour to present to Your Excellency my request for pardon on Miss Cavell's behalf.

I avail, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* BARON VON DER LANCKEN

BRUXELLES, *le* 11 *octobre* 1915.

EXCELLENCE,—Je viens d'apprendre que Miss Cavell, sujette anglaise, et par conséquent sous la protection de ma Légation, a été condamnée à mort ce matin par le conseil de guerre.

Sans examiner les causes qui ont motivé une condamnation aussi sévère, et qui, si les renseignements qu'on me donne sont exacts, est plus sévère dans le cas actuel que dans tous les autres cas de même espèce qui ont été jugés par le même tribunal, je crois pouvoir faire appel aux sentiments d'humanité et de générosité de Votre Excellence en faveur de Miss Cavell, afin que la peine de mort prononcée contre elle soit commuée et que cette malheureuse femme ne soit pas passée par les armes.

Miss Cavell en effet est la principale nurse de l'Institut chirurgical de Bruxelles. Elle a passé sa vie à soigner la souffrance des autres, et, à son école, se sont formées de nombreuses infirmières qui ont, dans le monde entier, en Allemagne comme en Belgique, veillé au chevet des malades. Au début de la guerre Miss Cavell a prodigué ses soins aux soldats allemands comme aux autres. A défaut d'autres raisons, sa carrière humanitaire est de nature à inspirer toutes les pitiés et à promouvoir tous les pardons. Si les informations qui me sont données sont exactes, Miss Cavell, loin de se cacher, a, avec une louable franchise, avoué tous les faits qui étaient à sa charge, et ce seraient même des renseignements

could not believe. Then the Reverend Mr. Gahan, pastor of the English church, came. He had had a note from some one at the St.-Gilles prison—a note written in German, saying simply:

"Come at once; some one is about to die."

He went away to the prison; his frail, delicate little wife remained at the Legation, and there my wife and Miss Larner sat with those women all that long evening, trying to comfort, to reassure them. Outside a cold rain was falling. Up in my chamber I waited. . . . A stay of execution would be granted,

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fournis par elle seule, et qu'elle seule pouvait fournir, qui ont causé l'aggravation de la peine prononcée contre elle.

C'est donc avec confiance, et avec l'espoir de la voir favorablement accueillie, que je prie Votre Excellence de présenter à M. le Gouverneur général ma requête, en grâce en faveur de Miss Cavell.

Je saisis, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

[*Written by hand by the Minister*]

MON CHER BARON,—Je suis trop malade pour vous présenter ma requête moi-même, mais je fais appel à votre générosité de cœur pour l'appuyer et sauver de la mort cette malheureuse. Ayez pitié d'elle!

Votre bien dévoué, BRAND WHITLOCK.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 11, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I have just heard that Miss Cavell, a British subject and consequently under the protection of my Legation, was this morning condemned to death by court martial.

If my information is correct the judgment in the present case is more severe than all the others that have been passed in similar cases tried by the same court, and, without going into the reasons for such a drastic sentence, I feel that I have the right to appeal to Your Excellency's feelings of humanity and generosity in Miss Cavell's favour, and to ask that the death penalty passed on Miss Cavell be commuted and that this unfortunate woman be not executed.

Miss Cavell is the head nurse of the Brussels Surgical Institute. She has spent her life in alleviating the sufferings of others, and her school has sent forth nurses who have watched at the bedside of the sick all the world over, in Germany as in Belgium. At the beginning of the war Miss Cavell bestowed her care as freely on the German soldiers as on the others. Even in default of all other reasons her career as a servant of humanity is such as to inspire the greatest sympathy and to call for pardon. If the information in my possession is correct, Miss Cavell, far from shielding herself, has, with commendable straightforwardness, admitted the truth of all the charges against her, and it is the very information which she herself has furnished and which she alone was in a position to furnish, that has aggravated the severity of the sentence passed against her.

It is then with confidence and in the hope of its favourable reception that I beg your Excellency to submit to the Governor-General my request for pardon on Miss Cavell's behalf.

I avail, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MY DEAR BARON,—I am too ill to present my request to you in person, but I appeal to the generosity of your heart to support it and to save this unfortunate woman from death. Have pity on her!

Yours sincerely, BRAND WHITLOCK.

of course; they always were granted. There was not in our time, anywhere, a court, even a German court martial, that would condemn a woman to death at half-past four in the afternoon and hurry her out and shoot her before dawn.

Midnight came, and Gibson, with a dark face, and de Leval, paler than ever. There was nothing to be done. De Leval had gone to Gibson and together they went in search of the Marquis, whom they found at Baron Lambert's, where he had been dining; he and Baron Lambert and M. Francqui were over their coffee. The Marquis, Gibson, and de Leval went to the Rue Lambermont. The Ministry was closed and dark; no one was there. They rang, and rang again, and finally the concierge appeared—no one was there, he said. They insisted. The concierge at last found a German functionary, who came down, stood staring stupidly; every one was gone; His Excellency was at the theatre. At what theatre? He did not know. They urged him to go and find out. He disappeared inside, went up and down the stairs two or three times, finally came out and said that he was at "Le Bois Sacré." They explained that the presence of the Baron was urgent and asked the man to go for him; they turned over the motor to him and he mounted on the box beside Eugène. They reached the little variety theatre there in the Rue d'Arenberg. The German functionary went in and found the Baron, who said he would come when the piece was over.

All this while Villalobar, Gibson, and de Leval were in the *salon* at the Ministry, the room of which I have spoken so often as the yellow *salon* because of the satin upholstery of its Louis XVI furniture of white lacquer—that bright, almost laughing little *salon;* all done in the gayest, lightest tones, where so many little dramas were played. All three of them were deeply moved and very anxious—the eternal contrast, as de Leval said, between sentiments and things. Lancken entered at last, very much surprised to find them; he was accompanied by Count Harrach and by the young Baron von Falkenhausen.

"What is it, gentlemen?" he said. "Has something serious happened?"

("*Qu'y a-t-il, messieurs? Est-il arrivé quelque chose de grave?*")

They told him why they were there, and Lancken, raising his hands, said:

"Impossible!"

He had vaguely heard that afternoon of a condemnation for "spying" (*sic*), but he did not know that it had anything to do with the case of Miss Cavell, and in any event it was impossible that they would put a woman to death that night.

"Who has given you this information? For, really, to come and disturb me at such an hour you must have information from serious and trustworthy sources."

(*"Qui donc vous a donné ces renseignements? Car, enfin, pour venir me déranger à pareille heure il faut que vous ayez des renseignements sérieux."*)

De Leval replied:

"Without doubt, I consider my information trustworthy, but I must refuse to tell you from whom I received it. Besides, what difference does it make? If the information is true our presence at this hour is justified; if it is not true I am ready to take the consequences of my mistake."

(*"Sans doute, je les considère comme tout à fait sérieux, mais je dois me refuser à vous en indiquer la source; qu'importe d'ailleurs? Si ces renseignements sont vrais, notre présence à cette heure se justifie, s'ils ne sont pas vrais, je supporterai toutes les conséquences de mon erreur."*)

The Baron showed irritation.

"What!" he said, "it is because 'they say' that you come and disturb me at such an hour, me and these gentlemen? No, no, gentlemen, this news cannot be true; orders are never executed with such precipitation, especially when a woman is concerned. Come to see me to-morrow."

(*"Comment! C'est sur des 'on dit' que vous venez me déranger à pareille heure; moi et ces messieurs? Non, non, messieurs, cette nouvelle ne peut pas être vraie; jamais on n'exécute avec une pareille précipitation, surtout pas une femme. Venez me voir demain."*)

He paused, and then added:

"Besides, how do you think that at this hour I can obtain any information. The Governor-General must certainly be sleeping."

(*"D'ailleurs, comment voulez-vous qu'à cette heure je puisse me renseigner? Le Gouverneur général doit certainement dormir."*)

Gibson, or one of them, suggested to him that a very simple way of finding out would be to telephone to the prison.

"Quite right," he said; "I had not thought of that."

("*En effet; je n'y pensais pas.*")

He went out, was gone a few minutes, and came back embarrassed, so they said, even a little bit ashamed, for he said:

"You are right, gentlemen; I have learned by telephone that Miss Cavell has been condemned, and that she will be shot to-night."

("*Vous avez raison, messieurs; on me téléphone que Miss Cavell a été condamnée et qu'elle sera fusillée cette nuit.*")

Then de Leval drew out the letter that I had written to the Baron and gave it to him, and he read it in an undertone—with a little sarcastic smile, so de Leval said—and when he had finished he handed it back to de Leval and said:

"But it is necessary to have a plea for mercy at the same time. . . .".

("*Mais il faudrait une requête en grâce en même temps. . . .*")

"Here it is" ("*La voici*"), said de Leval, and he gave him the document. Then they all sat down.

I could see the scene—as it was described to me by Villalobar, by Gibson, by de Leval, in that pretty little *salon Louis seize* that I knew so well—Lancken giving way to an outburst of feeling against "that spy," as he called Miss Cavell, and Gibson and de Leval by turns pleading with him, the Marquis sitting by. It was not a question of spying, as they pointed out; it was a question of the life of a woman—a life that had been devoted to charity, to the service of others. She had nursed wounded soldiers, she had even nursed German wounded at the beginning of the war, and now she was accused of but one thing: of having helped British soldiers make their way toward Holland. She may have been imprudent, she may have acted against the laws of the occupying Power, but she was not a spy, she was not even accused of being a spy, she had not been convicted of spying, and she did not merit the death of a spy. They sat there pleading, Gibson and de Leval, bringing forth all the arguments that would occur to men of sense and sensibility. Gibson called Lancken's attention to their failure to inform the Legation of the sentence, of their failure to keep the word that Conrad had given. He argued that the offence charged against Miss Cavell had long since been accomplished, that as she had been for some weeks in prison a slight delay in carrying out the sentence could

not endanger the German cause; he even pointed out the effect such a deed as the summary execution of the death sentence against a woman would have on public opinion, not only in Belgium but in America and elsewhere: he even spoke of the possibility of reprisals.

But it was all in vain. Baron von der Lancken explained to them that the Military Governor—that is, General von Sauberzweig—was the supreme authority (*Gerichtsherr*) in matters of this sort, that the Governor-General himself had no authority to intervene in such cases, and that under the provisions of German martial law it lay within the discretion of the Military Governor to accept or refuse an appeal for clemency. And then Villalobar suddenly cried out:

"Oh, come now! It's a woman; you can't shoot a woman like that!"

(*"C'est une femme, voyons; vous ne pouvez pas fusiller une femme comme cela!"*)

The Baron paused, was evidently moved.

"Gentlemen, it is past eleven o'clock; what can be done?"

(*"Messieurs, il est onze heures passées; comment faire?"*)

It was only Von Sauberzweig who could act, he said, and they urged the Baron to go to see Von Sauberzweig. Finally he consented. While he was gone, Villalobar, Gibson, and de Leval repeated to Harrach and Von Falkenhausen all the arguments that might move them. Von Falkenhausen was young, he had been to Cambridge in England, and he was touched, though of course he was powerless. And de Leval says that when he gave signs of showing pity Harrach cast a glance at him, so that he said nothing more, and that then Harrach said:

"The life of one German soldier seems to us much more important than those of all these old English nurses. . . ."

(*"La vie du moindre soldat allemand nous paraît bien plus intéressante que celles de toutes ces vieilles nurses anglaises. . . ."*)

At last Lancken returned and, standing there, announced:

"I am exceedingly sorry, but the Governor tells me that it is after due reflection that the execution was decided upon, and that he will not change his decision. . . . Making use of his prerogative, he even refuses to receive the plea for mercy. . . . Therefore, no one, not even the Emperor, can do anything for you."

(*"Je suis désolé, mais le Gouverneur m'a répondu que c'est*

après mûre réflexion que l'exécution a été décidée et qu'il n'y a rien à y changer. . . . Usant de son droit, il refuse même de recevoir le recours en grâce. . . . Donc, personne, même l'Empereur, ne pourrait rien pour vous.")

With this he handed my letter and the *requête en grâce* to Gibson. There was a moment of silence in the yellow *salon.* Then Villalobar sprang up, and seizing Lancken by the shoulder said to him in an energetic tone:

" Baron, I insist on speaking to you ! "

(" *Baron, je veux vous parler !* ")

" *C'est inutile* . . ." began Lancken.

" *Je* veux *vous parler !* " the Marquis replied, giving categorical emphasis to the harsh imperative.

The old Spanish pride had been mounting in the Marquis, and he literally dragged the tall Von der Lancken into a little room near by; then voices were heard in sharp discussion, and even through the partition the voice of Villalobar:

" It is idiotic, this thing you are going to do; you will have another Louvain ! "

(" *C'est fou ce que vous allez faire; vous allez avoir un nouveau Louvain !* ")

A few moments later they came back—Villalobar in silent rage, Lancken very red. And, as de Leval said, without another word, dumb, in consternation, filled with an immense despair, they came away.

I heard the report, and they withdrew. A little while and I heard the street door open. The women who had waited all that night went out into the rain.

III. AN EX-POST-FACTO EDICT

THE rain had ceased and the air was soft and warm the next morning; the sunlight shone through an autumn haze. But over the city the horror of the dreadful deed hung like a pall. *Affiches* were early posted * and crowds huddled about

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AVIS

Par jugement du 9 octobre 1915, le tribunal de campagne a prononcé les condamnations suivantes pour trahison commise pendant l'état de guerre (pour avoir fait passer des recrues à l'ennemi)

them in a kind of stupefaction, reading the long and tragic list down to the line that closed with a piece of gratuitous brutality:

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1. Philippe Baucq, architecte à Bruxelles, à la peine de mort;
2. Louise Thuliez, professeur à Lille, à la peine de mort;
3. Edith Cavell, directrice d'un institut médical à Bruxelles, à la peine de mort;
4. Louis Severin, pharmacien à Bruxelles, à la peine de mort;
5. Comtesse Jeanne de Belleville, à Montignies, à la peine de mort;
6. Herman Capiau, ingénieur à Wasmes, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
7. Épouse Ada Bodart, à Bruxelles, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
8. Albert Libiez, avocat à Wasmes, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
9. Georges Derveau, pharmacien à Pâturages, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
10. Princesse Maria de Croy, à Bellignies, à 10 ans de travaux forcés.

Dix-sept autres accusés ont été condamnés à des peines de travaux forcés ou d'emprisonnement allant de 2 à 8 ans.

Huit autres personnes, accusées de trahison commise pendant l'état de guerre, ont été acquittées.

Le jugement rendu contre Baucq et Cavell a déjà été exécuté.

BRUXELLES, *le 12 octobre* 1915. GOUVERNEMENT.

Translation

NOTICE

By judgment of October 9, 1915, the military tribunal has pronounced the following condemnations for treason committed in time of war (for having led recruits to the enemy):

1. Philippe Baucq, architect of Brussels, to death;
2. Louise Thuliez, teacher of Lille, to death;
3. Edith Cavell, directress of a medical institution at Brussels, to death;
4. Louis Severin, pharmacist of Brussels, to death;
5. Countess Jeanne de Belleville, of Montignies, to death;
6. Herman Capiau, engineer of Wasmes, to 15 years at hard labour;
7. Madame Ada Bodart, of Brussels, to 15 years at hard labour;
8. Albert Libiez, lawyer of Wasmes, to 15 years at hard labour;
9. Georges Derveau, pharmacist of Pâturages, to 15 years at hard labour;
10. Princess Maria de Croy, of Bellignies, to 10 years at hard labour.

Seventeen other accused persons were condemned to penalties of hard labour or imprisonment of from 2 to 8 years.

Eight other persons accused of treason committed in time of war were acquitted.

The judgment rendered against Baucq and Cavell has already been executed.

BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915. GOVERNMENT.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915.

[*Telegraphic*]

Your letter of September 23 and my replies of October 9 and 11. Miss Cavell sentenced yesterday and executed at 2 o'clock this morning, despite our best efforts continued until the last moment. Full report follows by mail.

WHITLOCK, *American Minister.*

[I was mistaken in supposing that the execution had taken place at two o'clock.]

"Le jugement rendu contre Baucq et Cavell a déjà été exécuté."

Of the twenty-six others condemned with Miss Cavell, four—Philippe Baucq, an architect of Brussels, Louise Thuliez, a school-teacher at Lille, Louis Severin, a pharmacist of Brussels, and the Countess Jeanne de Belleville, of Montignies-sur-Roc—were sentenced to death. Herman Capiau, a civil engineer of Wasmes, Madame Ada Bodart, of Brussels, Albert Libiez, a lawyer of Wasmes, and Georges Derveau, a pharmacist of Pâturages, were sentenced each to fifteen years' penal servitude at hard labour. The Princess Maria de Croy was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude at hard labour. Seventeen others were sentenced to hard labour or to terms of imprisonment of from two to eight years. The eight remaining were acquitted.

All day long sad and solemn groups stood under the trees in the boulevards amid the falling leaves gazing at the grim *affiche*. In one of the throngs a dignified old judge said:

*"Ce n'était pas l'exécution d'un jugement; c'était un assassinat!"**

The horror of it pervaded the house. I found my wife weeping at evening; no need to ask what was the matter. The wife of the chaplain had been there, with some detail of Miss Cavell's last hours—how she had risen wearily from her cot at the coming of the clergyman, drawn her dressing-gown about her thin throat.

I sent a note to the Baron von der Lancken asking that the Governor-General permit the body of Miss Cavell to be buried by the American Legation and the friends of the dead girl.† In reply the Baron himself came to see me in the afternoon. He was solemn and said that he wished to express his regret in the

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* *Translation:* "The judgment rendered against Baucq and Cavell has already been executed."

† MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* BARON VON DER LANCKEN

BRUXELLES, *le 12 octobre* 1915.

EXCELLENCE,—M. Faider, Premier Président de la Cour d'Appel de Bruxelles et Président de l'École belge d'Infirmières diplômées, me prie de réclamer, pour cette institution, le corps de Miss Cavell, qui en était directrice, et qui a été exécutée ce matin.

Le Comité s'engage, pour l'enlèvement du corps et pour la conservation de celui-ci dans un cimetière dans l'arrondissement de Bruxelles, à se conformer à toutes les mesures que l'Administration allemande jugerait utile de prescrire.

Je suis persuadé qu'aucune objection ne sera faite à cette demande, et que

circumstances, but that he had done all that he could. The body, he said, had already been interred, with respect and with religious rites, in a quiet place, and under the law it could not be exhumed without an order from the Imperial Government. The Governor-General himself had gone to Berlin.

And then came Villalobar; I thanked him for what he had done. He told me much, and described the scene the night before in that ante-room with Lancken. The Marquis was much concerned about the Countess Jeanne de Belleville and Mademoiselle Thuliez, both French, and hence protégées of his, condemned to die within eight days, but I told him not to be concerned; that the effect of Miss Cavell's martyrdom did not end with her death —it would procure other liberations, these among them. The

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l'on ne refusera pas à l'institution à laquelle Miss Cavell a consacré si charitablement une partie de son existence, l'accomplissement de ce pieux devoir.

Je me permets donc d'appuyer auprès de Votre Excellence la requête de l'École belge d'Infirmières diplômées, et dans l'attente de sa réponse,

Je la prie, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—M. Faider, First President of the Brussels Court of Appeal and President of the Belgian School of Certified Nurses, begs me to ask, on behalf of this institution, for the body of Miss Cavell, its directress, who was executed this morning.

The Committee undertakes, in the removal of the body and its burial in a cemetery in the Brussels district, to conform to all the regulations that the German authorities may see fit to make.

I feel sure that no objection will be made to this request, and that the institution to which Miss Cavell has so generously devoted a part of her life will not be denied the performance of this pious duty.

I venture, therefore, to commend to Your Excellency the request of the Belgian School of Certified Nurses, and, awaiting your reply,

I am, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 14, 1915.

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE,—Referring to my letter of yesterday in regard to the case of Miss Cavell, I beg to enclose herewith further correspondence in regard to my request that her body be delivered to the School for Nurses of which she was the directress.

I have not received a written reply to my note to Baron von der Lancken on the subject, but he came to see me yesterday afternoon and stated that the body had been interred near the prison of St.-Gilles, where the execution took place; that under the regulations governing such cases it was impossible to exhume the body without written permission from the Minister of War in Berlin. He added that he had no authority to ask permission to exhume the body, but that immediately upon the return of the Governor-General he would request him to take the matter up.

I shall hope to be able to tell you that we have at least been able to accomplish this small service

I am, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

thirst for blood had been slaked and there would be no more executions in that group; it was the way of the law of blood vengeance. We talked a long time about the tragedy, and about all the tragedies that went to make up the larger tragedy of the war.

"We are getting old," he said. "Life is going, and after the war, if we live in that new world, we shall be of the old—the new generation will push us aside."

Gibson and de Leval prepared reports of the whole matter and I sent them by the next courier to our Embassy at London.*

MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels, *to* MR. PAGE

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 13, 1915.

SIR,—Referring to previous correspondence in regard to the case of Miss Edith Cavell, I regret to be obliged to inform you, in confirmation of my telegram of yesterday morning, that the death sentence recommended by the prosecuting attorney was imposed by the court martial, and that Miss Cavell was executed early yesterday morning.

I enclose herewith for your information copies of all the correspondence which I have had with the German authorities in regard to this case, together with copies of previous letters addressed to you on the subject.

I know that you will understand without my telling you that we exhausted every possible effort to prevent the infliction of the death penalty, and that our failure has been felt by us as a very severe blow. I am convinced, however, that no step was neglected which could have had any effect. From the date we first learned of Miss Cavell's imprisonment we made frequent inquiries of the German authorities and reminded them of their promise that we should be fully informed as to developments.

They were under no misapprehension as to our interest in the matter. Although the German authorities did not inform me when the sentence had actually been passed, I learned, through an unofficial source, that judgment had been delivered, and that Miss Cavell was to be executed during the night. I immediately sent Mr. Gibson, the Secretary of Legation, to present to Baron von der Lancken my appeal that execution of the sentence should be deferred until the Governor could consider my plea for clemency. Mr. Gibson was accompanied by Maître de Leval, Legal Counsellor of the Legation, who had worked from the beginning upon the legal aspect of the case. Mr. Gibson was fortunate enough to find the Spanish Minister, and got him to accompany him on his visit to Baron von der Lancken. The details of the visit you will find in Mr. Gibson's report to me. The other papers which are attached speak for themselves and require no further comment from me.

I have, etc. BRAND WHITLOCK.

MR. HUGH GIBSON, Secretary of the American Legation in Brussels, *to* MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels

Report for the Minister

AMERICAN LEGATION, BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915.

SIR,—Upon learning early yesterday morning through unofficial sources that the trial of Miss Edith Cavell had been finished on Saturday afternoon and that the prosecuting attorney (*Kriegsgerichtsrat*) had asked for a sentence of death against her, telephonic inquiry was made at the Politische Abteilung as to the facts. It was stated that no sentence had as yet been pronounced and that there would probably be a delay of a day or two before a decision was

But somehow that very day the news got out into Holland and shocked the world. Richards, of the C.R.B., just back from

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reached. Mr. Conrad gave positive assurances that the Legation would be fully informed as to the developments in this case. Despite these assurances we made repeated inquiries in the course of the day, the last one being at 6.20 p.m., Belgian time. Mr. Conrad then stated that sentence had not yet been pronounced, and specifically renewed his previous assurances that he would not fail to inform us as soon as there was any news.

At 8.30 it was learned from an outside source that sentence had been passed in the course of the afternoon (before the last conversation with Mr. Conrad), and that the execution would take place during the night. In conformity with your instructions I went (accompanied by Me de Leval) to look for the Spanish Minister and found him dining at the home of Baron Lambert. I explained the circumstances to His Excellency and asked that (as you were ill and unable to go yourself) he go with us to see Baron von der Lancken and support as strongly as possible the plea, which I was to make in your name, that execution of the death penalty should be deferred until the Governor could consider your appeal for clemency.

We took with us a note addressed to Baron von der Lancken, and a plea for clemency (*requête en grâce*) addressed to the Governor-General. The Spanish Minister willingly agreed to accompany us, and we went together to the Politische Abteilung.

Baron von der Lancken and all the members of his staff were absent for the evening. We sent a messenger to ask that he return at once to see us in regard to a matter of utmost urgency. A little after ten o'clock he arrived, followed shortly after by Count Harrach and Herr von Falkenhausen, members of his staff. The circumstances of the case were explained to him and your note presented, and he read it aloud in our presence. He expressed disbelief in the report that sentence had actually been passed, and manifested some surprise that we should give credence to any report not emanating from official sources. He was quite insistent on knowing the exact source of our information, but this I did not feel at liberty to communicate to him. Baron von der Lancken stated that it was quite improbable that sentence had been pronounced, that even if so it would not be executed in so short a time, and that in any event it would be quite impossible to take any action before morning. It was, of course, pointed out to him that if the facts were as we believed them to be, action would be useless unless taken at once. We urged him to ascertain the facts immediately, and this, after some hesitancy, he agreed to do. He telephoned to the presiding judge of the court martial and returned in a short time to say that the facts were as we had represented them, and that it was intended to carry out the sentence before morning. We then presented, as earnestly as possible, your plea for delay. So far as I am able to judge, we neglected to present no phase of the matter which might have had any effect, emphasizing the horror of executing a woman, no matter what her offence, pointing out that the death sentence had heretofore been imposed only for actual cases of espionage, and that Miss Cavell was not even accused by the German authorities of anything so serious. I further called attention to the failure to comply with Mr. Conrad's promise to inform the Legation of the sentence. I urged that inasmuch as the offences charged against Miss Cavell were long since accomplished, and that as she had been for some weeks in prison, a delay in carrying out the sentence could entail no danger to the German cause. I even went so far as to point out the fearful effect of a summary execution of this sort upon public opinion, both here and abroad, and, although I had no authority for doing so, called attention to the possibility that it might bring about reprisals.

The Spanish Minister forcibly supported all our representations and made an earnest plea for clemency.

Baron von der Lancken stated that the Military Governor was the supreme

The Hague, said that they had already heard of it there and were filled with horror. And even the Germans, who seemed

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authority (*Gerichtsherr*) in matters of this sort; that appeal from his decision could be carried only to the Emperor, the Governor-General having no authority to intervene in such cases. He added that under the provisions of German martial law the Military Governor had discretionary power to accept or to refuse acceptance of an appeal for clemency. After some discussion he agreed to call the Military Governor on the telephone and learn whether he had already ratified the sentence, and whether there was any chance for clemency. He returned in about half an hour and stated that he had been to confer personally with the Military Governor, who said that he had acted in the case of Miss Cavell only after mature deliberation; that the circumstances in her case were of such a character that he considered the infliction of the death penalty imperative; and that in view of the circumstances of this case he must decline to accept your plea for clemency, or any representation in regard to the matter.

Baron von der Lancken then asked me to take back the note which I had presented to him. To this I demurred, pointing out that it was not a *requête en grâce* but merely a note to him transmitting a communication to the Governor, which was itself to be considered as the *requête en grâce*. I pointed out that this was expressly stated in your note to him, and tried to prevail upon him to keep it; he was very insistent, however, and I finally reached the conclusion that inasmuch as he had read it aloud to us, and we knew that he was aware of its contents, there was nothing to be gained by refusing to accept the note, and accordingly took it back.

Even after Baron von der Lancken's very positive and definite statement that there was no hope, and that under the circumstances "even the Emperor himself could not intervene," we continued to appeal to every sentiment to secure delay, and the Spanish Minister even led Baron von der Lancken aside in order to say very forcibly a number of things which he would have felt hesitancy in saying in the presence of the younger officers and of Me de Leval, a Belgian subject.

His Excellency talked very earnestly with Baron von der Lancken for about a quarter of an hour. During this time Me de Leval and I presented to the younger officers every argument we could think of. I reminded them of our untiring efforts on behalf of German subjects at the outbreak of the war and during the siege of Antwerp. I pointed out that while our services had been rendered without any thought of future favours, they should certainly entitle you to some consideration for the only request of this sort you had made since the beginning of the war. Unfortunately, our efforts were unavailing. We persevered until it was only too clear that there was no hope of securing any consideration for the case.

We left the Politische Abteilung shortly after midnight and I immediately returned to the Legation to report to you.

HUGH GIBSON.

Me DE LEVAL *to* MR. WHITLOCK, American Minister in Brussels

Report for the Minister

October 12, 1915.

SIR,—As soon as the Legation received an intimation that Miss Cavell was arrested your letter of August 31 was sent to Baron von der Lancken. The German authorities were by that letter requested, *inter alia*, to allow me to see Miss Cavell, so as to have all necessary steps taken for her defence. No reply being received, the Legation, on September 10, reminded the German authorities of your letter.

The German reply, sent on September 12, was that I would not be allowed to see Miss Cavell, but that Me Braun, lawyer at the Brussels court,

always to do a deed and to consider its effect afterwards, knew that they had another Louvain, another *Lusitania*, for which to

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was defending her and was already seeing the German authorities about the case.

I immediately asked Me Braun to come to see me at the Legation, which he did a few days later. He informed me that personal friends of Miss Cavell had asked him to defend her before the German court, that he agreed to do so, but that owing to some unforeseen circumstances he was prevented from pleading before that court, adding that he had asked Me Kirschen, a member of the Brussels Bar and his friend, to take up the case and plead for Miss Cavell, and that Me Kirschen had agreed to do so.

I, therefore, at once put myself in communication with Me Kirschen, who told me that Miss Cavell was prosecuted for having helped soldiers to cross the frontier. I asked him whether he had seen Miss Cavell and whether she had made any statement to him, and to my surprise found that the lawyers defending prisoners before the German military court were not allowed to see their clients before the trial, and were not shown any document of the prosecution. This, Me Kirschen said, was in accordance with the German military rules. He added that the hearing of the trial of such cases was carried out very carefully, and that in his opinion, although it was not possible to see the client before the trial, in fact the trial itself developed so carefully and so slowly, that it was generally possible to have a fair knowledge of all the facts and to present a good defence for the prisoner. This would specially be the case for Miss Cavell, because the trial would be rather long as she was prosecuted with thirty-four other prisoners.

I informed Me Kirschen of my intention to be present at the trial so as to watch the case. He immediately dissuaded me from taking such attitude, which he said would cause a great prejudice to the prisoner, because the German judges would resent it and feel it almost as an affront, as if I was appearing to exercise a kind of supervision on the trial. He thought that if the Germans would admit my presence, which was very doubtful, it would in any case cause prejudice to Miss Cavell.

Me Kirschen assured me over and over again that the military court of Brussels was always perfectly fair and that there was not the slightest danger of any miscarriage of justice. He promised that he would keep me posted on all the developments which the case would take and would report to me the exact charges that were brought against Miss Cavell and the facts concerning her that would be disclosed at the trial, so as to allow me to judge by myself about the merits of the case. He insisted that, of course, he would do all that was humanly possible to defend Miss Cavell to the best of his ability.

Three days before the trial took place Me Kirschen wrote me a few lines saying that the trial would be on the next Thursday, October 7. The Legation at once sent him, on October 5, a letter confirming in writing, in the name of the Legation, the arrangement that had been made between him and me. This letter was delivered to Me Kirschen by a messenger of the Legation.

The trial took two days, ending Friday the 8th.

On Saturday I was informed by an outsider that the trial had taken place, but that no judgment would be reached till a few days later.

Receiving no report from Me Kirschen I tried to find him but failed. I then sent him a note on Sunday, asking him to send his report to the Legation or call there on Monday morning at 8.30. At the same time I obtained from some other person present at the trial some information about what had occurred, and the following facts were disclosed to me:

Miss Cavell was prosecuted for having helped English and French soldiers, as well as Belgian young men, to cross the frontier and to go over to England. She had admitted by signing a statement before the day of the trial, and by public acknowledgment in court, in the presence of all the other prisoners and the lawyers, that she was guilty of the charges brought against her, and she

answer before the bar of civilization. The lives of the three who remained of the five who had been condemned to death were

had acknowledged not only that she had helped these soldiers to cross the frontier, but also that some of them had thanked her in writing when arriving in England. This last admission made her case so much the more serious, because if it only had been proved against her that she had helped the soldiers to traverse the Dutch frontier, and no proof was produced that these soldiers had reached a country at war with Germany, she could only have been sentenced for an attempt to commit the "crime" and not for the "crime" being duly accomplished. As the case stood the sentence fixed by the German military law was a sentence of death.

Paragraph 58 of the German Military Code says:

"Will be sentenced to death for treason any person who, with the intention of helping the hostile Power, or of causing harm to the German or allied troops, is guilty of one of the crimes of paragraph 90 of the German Penal Code."

The case referred to in above said paragraph 90 consists in:

". . . conducting soldiers to the enemy . . ." (viz. "*dem Feinde Mannschaften zuführt*").

The penalties above set forth apply, according to paragraph 160 of the German Code, in case of war, to foreigners as well as to Germans.

In her oral statement before the court Miss Cavell disclosed almost all the facts of the whole prosecution. She was questioned in German, an interpreter translating all the questions in French, with which language Miss Cavell was well acquainted. She spoke without trembling and showed a clear mind. Often she added some greater precision to her previous depositions.

When she was asked why she helped these soldiers to go to England, she replied that she thought that if she had not done so they would have been shot by the Germans, and that therefore she thought she only did her duty to her country in saving their lives.

The Military Public Prosecutor said that argument might be good for English soldiers, but did not apply to Belgian young men whom she induced to cross the frontier and who would have been perfectly free to remain in the country without danger to their lives.

Me Kirschen made a very good plea for Miss Cavell, using all arguments that could be brought in her favour before the court.

The Military Public Prosecutor, however, asked the court to pass a death sentence on Miss Cavell and eight other prisoners amongst the thirty-five. The court did not seem to agree, and the judgment was postponed. The person informing me said he thought that the court would not go to the extreme limit.

Anyhow, after I had found out these facts (viz. Sunday evening), I called at the Political Division of the German Government in Belgium and asked whether, now that the trial had taken place, permission would be granted to me to see Miss Cavell in jail, as surely there was no longer any object in refusing that permission. The German official, Mr. Conrad, said he would make the necessary inquiry at the court and let me know later on.

I also asked him that permission be granted to Mr. Gahan, the English clergyman, to see Miss Cavell.

At the same time we prepared at the Legation, to be ready for every eventuality, a petition for pardon, addressed to the Governor-General in Belgium, and a transmitting note addressed to Baron von der Lancken.

Monday morning at 11 I called up Mr. Conrad on the telephone from the Legation (as I already had done previously on several occasions when making inquiries about the case), asking what the military court had decided about Mr. Gahan and myself seeing Miss Cavell. He replied that Mr. Gahan could not see her, but that she could see any of the three Protestant clergymen attached to the prison; and that I could not see her till the judgment was pronounced and signed, but that this would probably only take place in a day or two. I

ultimately spared, as I had told Villalobar they would be. The President of the United States and the King of Spain made representations at Berlin on behalf of the Countess de Belleville and Mademoiselle Thuliez, and their sentences were commuted to imprisonment, as was that of Louis Severin, the Brussels druggist. The storm of universal loathing and reprobation for the deed was too much even for the Germans.

The *affiche* announcing the execution of the sentence against Miss Cavell was not the only one on the walls of Brussels that morning. There were others, among them one that announced that a Belgian soldier—Pierre Joseph Claes, of Schaerbeek, a suburb of Brussels—had been condemned at Limbourg and shot as a spy,* and another that in the Hainaut, at Mons, ninety-four

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asked the German official to inform the Legation immediately after the passing of said judgment, so that I might see Miss Cavell at once, thinking, of course, that the Legation might, according to your intentions, take immediate steps for Miss Cavell's pardon if the judgment really was a sentence of death.

Much surprised still to receive no news from Me Kirschen, I then called at his house at 12.30, and was informed that he would not be there till about the end of the afternoon. I then called, at 12.40, at the house of another lawyer interested in the case of a fellow-prisoner, and found that he also was out. In the afternoon, however, the latter lawyer called at my house, saying that in the morning he had heard from the German Kommandantur that judgment would be passed only the next morning, viz. Tuesday morning. He said that he feared that the court would be very severe for all the prisoners.

Shortly after this lawyer left me, and while I was preparing a note about the case, at 8 p.m., I was privately and reliably informed that the judgment had been delivered at five o'clock in the afternoon, that Miss Cavell had been sentenced to death, and that she would be shot at 2 o'clock the next morning. I told my informant that I was extremely surprised at this, because the Legation had received no information yet, either from the German authorities or from Me Kirschen, but that the matter was too serious to run the smallest chance, and that therefore I would proceed immediately to the Legation to confer with Your Excellency and take all possible steps to save Miss Cavell's life.

According to Your Excellency's decision, Mr. Gibson and myself went, with the Spanish Minister, to see Baron von der Lancken, and the report of our interview and of our efforts to save Miss Cavell is given to you by Mr. Gibson.

This morning Mr. Gahan, the English clergyman, called to see me and told me that he had seen Miss Cavell in her cell yesterday night at 10 o'clock, that he had given her the Holy Communion and had found her admirably strong and calm. I asked Mr. Gahan whether she had made any remarks concerning the legal side of her case, and whether the confession which she made before the trial and in the court was, in his opinion, perfectly free and sincere. Mr. Gahan says that she told him that she perfectly well knew what she had done; that according to the law, of course, she was guilty and had admitted her guilt, but that she was happy to die for her country.

G. DE LEVAL.

* Le Gouverneur militaire de la province de Limbourg publie ce qui suit :

AVIS

Par jugement du 7 octobre 1915 du tribunal de campagne du gouvernement

workmen had been condemned to prison for having refused to work for the Germans. The terror was spread everywhere.

But two of the new announcements bore on the Cavell case. One of them, on the walls or in the newspapers before the sentence was pronounced against Miss Cavell, was a long screed of Von Bissing's that made an impression almost as painful as the crime it sought to justify, and enraged and humiliated the people. The statement or proclamation—prepared, no doubt, while the trial was in progress—was posted on Monday, before the judgment against Miss Cavell had been pronounced, and evidently it had been put out to prepare the public mind for the shock of the *affiche* of Tuesday morning which was to announce the murder of Miss Cavell. Its unctuous, sanctimonious tone, invariably the sign of some new outrage, the allusion to espionage, the threat of severest penalties, show that the deed had been premeditated and arranged. It showed another thing—that the offensive of

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militaire de la province de Limbourg, lequel jugement a été confirmé hier par moi, le nommé

Pierre-Joseph CLAES

de nationalité belge, né le 8 mai 1887 à Schaerbeek, près de Bruxelles, a été

condamné à la peine de mort

pour espionnage.

Claes a avoué qu'en sa qualité de soldat belge, il était venu en Belgique, habillé en civil, dans le but d'y pratiquer l'espionnage.

Le condamné a été fusillé aujourd'hui.

Der Militärgouverneur der Provinz Limbourg,

HASSELT, *le 8 octobre* 1915. KEIM, *Général-Major.*

BRUXELLES, *le 12 octobre* 1915. GENERAL-GOUVERNEMENT.

Translation

The Military Governor of the Province of Limbourg publishes the following :

NOTICE

By judgment of October 7, 1915, the military court of the Province of Limbourg, which judgment was confirmed by me yesterday, one

Pierre-Joseph CLAES,

of Belgian nationality, born May 8, 1887, at Schaerbeek, near Brussels, has been

condemned to death

for espionage.

Claes has admitted that in his quality of Belgian soldier he had come into Belgium in civilian dress for the purpose of spying.

The condemned man was shot to-day.

The Military Government of the Province of Limbourg,

HASSELT, *October* 8, 1915. KEIM, *Major-General.*

BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915. GENERAL GOVERNMENT.

the Allies had angered the Germans; and, as always, when events were not to their liking, they avenged themselves upon the helpless.

The result of the offensive of the Allies is known, that offensive so long expected on the Western Front [said the proclamation of the Governor-General]. The German lines resisted a violent cannonading lasting seventy hours, and the numerically superior forces of the enemy. The French have lost several hundred thousand in killed and wounded, and the English, both white and coloured, have suffered even greater losses. In spite of the enormous number of lives and the immense amount of ammunition recklessly sacrificed, the enemies of the German Empire have in no way succeeded in their aim, which is to reconquer Belgium and the north of France.

While this decisive battle was raging on the front, I have had to protect the rear of the German army against hostile manœuvres. During this time I have been obliged to combat tendencies due—as was the desperate offensive of the Allies—to a belief in a prompt re-establishment of the old order of things, and to old and vain hopes. Certain circles which, more than any other, should have wished to aid in maintaining interior peace, have incited minds to resistance; certain persons who have declared themselves ready to co-operate with me in re-establishing prosperity in the country, have once more lent a complaisant ear to insinuations emanating from Havre and from London; false prophets spreading false news have won over the unfortunate credulous and have caused them to commit unlawful deeds. By false patriotism, and even more by cupidity, the Belgians have allowed themselves to become involved in a spy-system which has been defeated even as has the enemy offensive.

In spite of all we have succeeded in holding at bay the sly and cowardly enemy which treacherously menaced the security of the German army. The most rigorous measures have had to be applied to those who through vain hopes have rendered themselves culpable of unlawful deeds. The facts, which speak eloquently, will themselves refute all the loud talk of victory on the part of our enemies, and of the news announcing that the German armies are evacuating the country. That which we hold, we hold well.

This last deception should serve as a lesson to the Belgians in the future and teach them no longer to place their faith so credulously in news which the following day inevitably reveals itself to be false. All those who, under my administration, are working, who are earning sufficient wages, and who have acquired the inward satisfaction of duty accomplished, must help those who are still deluded to enjoy these same benefits. The experience of the last few weeks proves that the security of the German armies is assured against the most cunningly planned plots. But the security of everyday life, which alone can heal the wounds of suffering Belgium, can be guaranteed only to those who, leaving to the soldiers the business of fighting and seconding my efforts, aid in their way the interior peace and the economic prosperity of the country. The orders that I have promulgated pursue the same end; whoever disregards them will suffer in all their severity the penalties that they enact. Those who resist my efforts must expect to undergo all the rigours of martial law; those who aid

me in my task will help in the most efficacious manner their country, their compatriots, and themselves.*

But it was the other *affiche,* which attracted no notice, or very little notice, that had the greater significance, for it stamps with the ineffaceable seal of its amazing admission the whole proceeding that did Miss Cavell to death as illegal, even according

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NOUVELLES PUBLIÉES PAR LE GOUVERNEMENT GÉNÉRAL ALLEMAND

On connaît le résultat que l'offensive des alliés, cette offensive annoncée depuis si longtemps, a atteint sur le front occidental. Les lignes allemandes ont résisté à une canonnade de 70 heures et à la supériorité numérique considérable de l'ennemi. Les Français ont eu plusieurs centaines de milliers de tués et de blessés, tandis que les Anglais, blancs et de couleur, ont subi des pertes relativement plus élevées encore. Malgré le nombre énorme des vies humaines et les immense quantités de munitions qu'ils ont sacrifiés sans ménagement, les ennemis de l'Empire allemand ne se sont rapprochés en rien de leur but, qui est de reconquérir la Belgique et la France du Nord.

Pendant que cette bataille décisive faisait fureur sur le front, j'ai eu à protéger le dos de l'armée allemande contre des manœuvres hostiles. A cette occasion j'ai été obligé de combattre des tendances dues, tout comme l'offensive désespérée des Alliés, à d'anciennes et vaines espérances, à la croyance en un prompt rétablissement de l'ancien état de choses. Certains milieux qui, plus que tout autre, devraient avoir à cœur de favoriser la paix intérieure, ont incité les esprits à la résistance; des personnes qui s'étaient déclarées prêtes à coopérer avec moi à rétablir le bien-être dans le pays, ont prêté de nouveau une oreille complaisante aux insinuations venant du Havre et de Londres; de faux prophètes répandant de fausses nouvelles ont séduit des malheureux crédules et les ont amenés à commettre des actions criminelles. Par faux patriotisme et plus encore par cupidité, des Belges se sont laissés entraîner à un espionnage qui a abouti au même échec que l'offensive ennemie.

Malgré tout, nous sommes parvenus à tenir à l'écart l'ennemi sournois et lâche qui, perfidement, menaçait la sécurité de l'armée allemande. Les peines les plus rigoureuses ont dû être appliquées sans pitié à ceux que de vains espoirs ont amenés à se rendre coupables d'actions criminelles. Les faits, qui parlent un langage éloquent, réfuteront par eux-mêmes tous les bruits de victoires de nos ennemis et les nouvelles annonçant que les armées allemandes évacuent le pays. Ce que nous tenons, nous le tenons bien.

Cette dernière déception impose aux Belges le devoir d'en tirer des enseignements quant à l'avenir et de ne plus prêter si crédulement foi à des nouvelles qui, le lendemain, forcément, se révèleront mensonges. Tous ceux qui, sous mon administration, travaillent, qui gagnent suffisamment et qui ont su acquérir la satisfaction intérieure du devoir accompli, doivent contribuer à faire jouir des mêmes bienfaits ceux de leurs prochains qui sont encore aveuglés. L'expérience des dernières semaines prouve que la sécurité des armées allemandes est assurée contre les complots les mieux tramés. Mais la sécurité de la vie active, qui, seule, peut guérir les maux de la Belgique souffrante, ne peut-être garantie qu'à ceux qui, laissant aux soldats le soin de combattre et secondant mes efforts, favorisent dans leur milieu la paix intérieure et la prospérité économique du pays. Les arrêtés que je promulgue poursuivent le même but; quiconque les enfreint subira, dans toute leur dureté, les peines qu'ils edictent. Ceux qui contrecarrent mes efforts doivent s'attendre a subir toutes les rigueurs de la loi martiale; ceux qui me secondent dans ma tâche viennent en aide, de la manière la plus efficace, à leur patrie, à leurs compatriots et à eux-mêmes.

LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL.

to the German code. It was a last and crowning infamy, that threw a flood of light on what might have long remained the mystery of that trial behind the closed doors of the Senate chamber—an *ex-post-facto* law or decree defining and declaring the offence for which Miss Cavell had already been tried, condemned, and put to death.

In the statement of Von Bissing on the " situation," which I have translated in full, there was a reference to spying—*espionnage*. It was the first time that the acts of Miss Cavell had been referred to publicly and officially as spying; but it was as " the spy Cavell " that they always referred to her thereafter. But Miss Cavell was not charged with spying; she was not convicted or sentenced to death for spying. There was no evidence and no claim that she had been a spy. She was charged with having violated that paragraph of the German Military Penal Code which punished with death those who conducted troops to the enemy (*dem Feinde Mannschaften zuführt*), and it was on this charge that she was convicted. To the German military mind this is " treason," and the nomenclature does not seem any the less astonishing when they qualify it by calling it " treason in time of war."

But as a matter of fact and as a matter of law, even this charge did not apply and was not sustained. Miss Cavell had not conducted any troops to the enemy; in individual cases she had aided soldiers in various charitable and human ways, and had helped them and boys, who had as yet performed no military service and never worn a uniform, to escape out of Belgium and to cross the frontier into Holland, a neutral country, where the soldiers would be interned until the end of the war and the young men have the status of citizens of any other nation. There was, indeed, no proof that any of these soldiers or these Belgian boys had joined the enemy, singly or as " troops," except, it is said, in the case of one lad who wrote and mailed a postal card to thank Miss Cavell for the aid she had rendered him, saying that he had got to England and joined the British Army. This card, it was said, was found by the German secret police, and proved to be one of the clues that led to Miss Cavell's arrest.

But even so, these men were not conducted by Miss Cavell to the enemy; the charge was—and she did not deny it—that she had given them asylum and had aided them either by gifts

of money, of food and of clothes, or by hospitality and care when they were sick.

These are not mere lawyers' quibbles; they would seem to afford sufficient reason in any English or American court for dismissing the charge on the ground of variance. And the Germans themselves recognized this fatal variance, for on that very day, October 12, after they had executed a judgment which even their own laws would not sustain, they posted the *affiche* announcing a new decree that sought to cure the defect by defining the offence for which they had already shot their frail victim, and punishing with death those who aided or harboured fugitive soldiers.

"Whoever knowingly aids, in any manner whatsoever, such a person [i.e. a person who has wished to aid an enemy of Germany] in concealing his presence, whether by giving him lodging, by clothing him, or by giving him nourishment, is liable to the same punishment [death]." *

AVIS

Il y a encore dans le territoire du Gouvernement général des personnes qui se cachent et qui ont appartenu pendant la guerre à une armée ennemie ou sont venues dans le pays sur l'ordre d'un gouvernement ennemi. Je consens à accorder l'impunité à ces personnes si elles se font connaître et se présentent volontairement à l'autorité militaire allemande dans les vingt-quatre heures; dans ce cas je me bornerai à les envoyer en Allemagne comme prisonniers de guerre. Ces personnes, si elles ne se sont pas présentées avant l'expiration du délai précité, ainsi que toutes les autres personnes qui leur viennent en aide d'une manière quelconque, entre autres en les logeant, en les habillant ou en les nourrissant, seront punies de la peine de mort ou de fortes peines de travaux forcés et d'emprisonnement en vertu de l'arrêté ci-dessous.

J'ai invité les gouverneurs à décréter des dispositions spéciales et des interdictions de nature à assurer la sécurité des installations importantes au point de vue militaire. Quiconque enfreindra ces interdictions s'exposera à être tué sur-le-champ.

Voici le texte de l'arrêté susmentionné:

ARRÊTÉ

concernant les personnes appartenant aux armées ennemies et les agents ennemis qui se cachent dans le pays, ainsi que les personnes qui leur viennent en aide.

Article 1er.—Quiconque appartient à une armée ennemie ou a appartenu à une telle après le début de la guerre, quiconque se trouve au service d'un gouvernement ennemi ou d'une personne qui agit dans l'intérêt d'un gouvernement ennemi, sera puni de travaux forcés (à moins que d'autres lois ne prévoient une peine plus rigoureuse encore) s'il dissimule aux autorités allemandes sa présence dans le territoire du gouvernement ou s'y tient caché.

En cas de circonstances atténuantes, la peine ne pourra être inférieure à trois mois.

Art. 2.—S'il résulte des circonstances que la personne en question a voulu favoriser une puissance étrangère ou nuire aux forces militaires de l'Empire allemand ou de ses alliés, elle sera punie de la peine de mort.

Art. 3.—Quiconque, en connaissance de cause, aide, d'une manière quelconque

Such was the new edict of the Governor-General, promulgated an hour or two after Miss Cavell had been shot, to cure a defect in the process that had condemned her.

IV. MISS CAVELL'S LAST NIGHT

OUR rector, Mr. Gahan, whose services and sacrifices during all those sad and brutal times were consoling to so many, was the last representative of her own people to see Miss Cavell. He had gone from the Legation to the prison of St.-Gilles, and

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une telle personne à dissimuler son séjour, entre autres en la logeant, en l'habillant ou la nourrissant, est passible des mêmes peines.

Si, dans les cas prévus à l'article 2, le complice bénéficie de circonstances atténuantes, la peine de mort pourra être remplacée par une peine de travaux forcés qui ne sera pas inférieure à deux ans.

Art. 4.—Quiconque connaît le séjour d'une des personnes désignées à l'article 1er et n'en prévient pas immédiatement une autorité militaire allemande, sera puni d'une peine d'emprisonnement; quiconque, dans un tel cas, a su que les circonstances prévues à l'article 2 existaient en réalité, sera puni de travaux forcés ou d'une peine d'emprisonnement qui ne pourra être inférieure à six mois.

Art. 5.—Ne seront pas punies les personnes désignées aux articles 1er et 2 qui se trouvent dans le territoire du gouvernement général et se présentent volontairement à l'autorité militaire dans les vingt-quatre heures de l'affichage public du présent arrêté.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,

BRUXELLES, *le 12 octobre* 1915. BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

Translation

NOTICE

There are still in the territory of the General Government persons who are in hiding and who have belonged during the war to an enemy army, or who have come into the country under the orders of an enemy Government. I consent to accord immunity to these persons if they make themselves known, and if they present themselves voluntarily to the German military authorities within twenty-four hours; in this case I shall limit myself to sending them to Germany as prisoners of war. These persons, if they do not present themselves before the expiration of the prescribed time, as well as all other persons who aid them in any manner whatsoever, whether by giving them lodging, by clothing them or by nourishing them, will be punished with death or with hard labour and imprisonment, by virtue of the order hereinunder.

I have asked the Governors to decree special provisions and prohibitions of such a nature as to assure the safety of important installations from a military point of view. Whoever disregards these prohibitions will expose himself to death on the spot.

The following is the text of the above-mentioned order:

ORDER

concerning persons belonging to enemy armies and enemy agents who are hiding themselves in the country, as well as persons who aid them.

Art. 1.—Whoever belongs to an enemy army, or has belonged to such since the beginning of the war, whoever is in the employ of an enemy Government

his wife was among the women waiting on that night at the Legation. Mr. Gahan was with Miss Cavell all that evening, and though they would not let him be with her at the very last, it is the one ameliorating circumstance of the tragedy that the German chaplain was kind.

When Mr. Gahan arrived at the prison that night Miss Cavell was lying on the narrow cot in her cell; she rose, drew on a dressing-gown, folded it about her thin form, and received him calmly. She had never expected such an end to the trial, but she was brave and was not afraid to die. The judgment had been read to her that afternoon there in her cell. She had written letters to her mother in England and to certain of her friends, and entrusted them to the German authorities.

She did not complain of her trial; she had avowed all, she said—and it is one of the saddest, bitterest ironies of the whole tragedy that she seems not to have known that all she had avowed was not sufficient, even under German law, to justify the judgment passed upon her. The German chaplain had been kind and she was willing for him to be with her at the last, if Mr. Gahan could not be. Life had not been all happy for her, she said, and she was glad to die for her country. Life

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or of a person who is acting in the interests of an enemy Government, will be punished with hard labour (unless other laws provide a punishment even more severe) if he conceals his presence from the German authorities in the territory of the Government, or keeps himself hidden therein.

In case of extenuating circumstances the punishment shall not be less than three months.

Art. 2.—If circumstances should prove that the person in question has wished to aid a foreign Power, or to harm the military forces of the German Empire, or of its allies, he will be punished with death.

Art. 3.—Whoever knowingly aids in any manner whatsoever such a person in concealing his presence, whether by giving him lodging, by clothing him, or by giving him nourishment, is liable to the same punishment.

If, in the cases provided in Article 2, the accomplice profits by the extenuating circumstances, the penalty of death may be replaced by the punishment of hard labour for a period of not less than two years.

Art. 4.—Whoever knows of the presence of such persons as are mentioned in Article 1 and does not immediately warn the German military authorities of them, will be punished with imprisonment; whoever, in such case, has known that the circumstances envisaged by Article 2 have actually existed will be punished with hard labour, or by imprisonment for a period of not less than six months.

Art. 5.—The persons designated in Articles 1 and 2 who are in the territory of the General Government will not be punished if they present themselves voluntarily to the military authorities within twenty-four hours of the public posting of this order.

The Governor-General in Belgium,

BRUSSELS, *October* 12, 1915. BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

had been hurried, and she was grateful for those weeks of rest in prison.

She had no hatred for any one, and she had no regrets; she received the sacrament.

"Patriotism is not enough," she said. "I must have no hatred and no bitterness toward any one."

Those, so far as we know, were her last words. She had been told that she would be called at five o'clock. . . . At six they came, and the black van conveyed her and the architect Baucq to the Tir National—where they were shot. Miss Cavell was brave and calm at the last, and she died facing the firing-squad—another martyr in the old cause of human liberty.

In the touching report that Mr. Gahan made there is a statement—one of the last that Edith Cavell ever made—which in its exquisite pathos illuminates the whole of that life of stern duty, of human service and martyrdom.* She said that she was grateful for the ten weeks of rest she had just before the end. During those weeks she had read and reflected; her companions and her solace were her Bible, her Prayer Book, and "The Imitation

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* *Report by* MR. GAHAN, *British Chaplain in Brussels:*

On Monday evening, October 11, I was admitted by special passport from the German authorities to the prison of St.-Gilles, where Miss Edith Cavell had been confined for ten weeks. The final sentence had been given early that afternoon.

To my astonishment and relief I found my friend perfectly calm and resigned. But this could not lessen the tenderness and intensity of feeling on either part during that last interview of almost an hour.

Her first words to me were upon a matter concerning herself personally, but the solemn asseveration which accompanied them was made expressedly in the light of God and eternity. She then added that she wished all her friends to know that she willingly gave her life for her country, and said: "I have no fear nor shrinking; I have seen death so often that it is not strange or fearful to me." She further said: "I thank God for this ten weeks' quiet before the end." "Life has always been hurried and full of difficulty." "This time of rest has been a great mercy." "They have all been very kind to me here. But this I would say, standing as I do in view of God and eternity: I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness toward any one."

We partook of the Holy Communion together, and she received the Gospel message of consolation with all her heart. At the close of the little service I began to repeat the words "Abide with me," and she joined softly in the end.

We sat quietly talking until it was time for me to go. She gave me parting messages for relations and friends. She spoke of her soul's needs at the moment and she received the assurance of God's Word as only the Christian can do.

Then I said "Good-bye," and she smiled and said, "We shall meet again."

The German military chaplain was with her at the end and afterwards gave her Christian burial. He told me: "She was brave and bright to the last. She professed her Christian faith and that she was glad to die for her country." "She died like a heroine."

H. STIRLING T. GAHAN, *British Chaplain, Brussels.*

of Christ." The notes she made in these books reveal her thoughts at that time and will touch the uttermost depths of any nature nourished in that beautiful faith which is at once so tender and so austere. The Prayer Book, with those laconic entries on its fly-leaf in which she set down the sad and eloquent chronology of her fate, the copy of the "Imitation" which she had read and marked during those weeks in prison—weeks which, as she so pathetically said, had given her rest and quiet and time to think in a life that had been "so hurried"—and the passages noted in her firm hand, all have a deep and appealing pathos.

Just before the end she wrote a number of letters; she forgot no one. Among the letters that she left was one addressed to the nurses of her school, and there was a message for a girl who was trying to break herself of the morphine habit. Miss Cavell had been trying to help her, and she sent word telling her to be brave, and that if God would permit she would continue to try to help her.

It was on October 10, 1915, already doomed to death, that Miss Cavell wrote the letter to her nurses. The letter was in French, for all the nurses were Belgian girls, and in it, after expressing the sorrow she felt in bidding adieu to her pupils, she wrote of the joy she had had in being called on September 17, 1907, to organize at Brussels the first school of graduate nurses in Belgium. At that time nursing had not been made a science in Belgium as it had been in England and in America; the graduate nurse was unknown. Dr. Depage, one of the leading physicians in Belgium—one of the leading physicians, indeed, in the world—had been anxious that such a school be founded, and it was through his inspiration and that of his wife that the school was made possible. They succeeded in interesting in the project a number of influential men and women in Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Liége, and Mons; a society was formed, and Madame Ernest Solvey gave to the school the sum of 300,000 francs, with which was built the model hospital and training school for nurses that stands now in the Rue de Bruxelles in Uccle. The building had fifty rooms for nurses and thirty rooms for patients, study halls, theatres for operations, and represented the ideas of Dr. Depage, of Madame Depage, and of Miss Cavell. The building was completed in the month of May 1915—the very month that Madame Depage went down on the *Lusitania*, and five months before Miss Cavell was killed—and, by the operation

of the old ironic rule of life, neither of the two women most concerned ever saw established in it the school they had founded. Miss Cavell, in organizing and establishing this school, encountered very real difficulties in those first years, for, as she says in her letter, "*tout était nouveau dans la profession pour la Belgique.*" She was evidently a woman of great force of will and of nervous energy; she had a high intelligence and a profound character, and she succeeded. She established the school, she established nursing in Belgium, and her name and that of Madame Depage, both victims of German frightfulness, will ever be associated with the institution at Brussels.

The letter, with its stern command of emotion and feeling, though all the while deep down there is an affection that somehow fears to express itself, sounds the profound depths of the Anglo-Saxon nature, and it somehow sums up the character that made a noble and devoted life. When one thinks that there in her cell behind the grim walls of the prison of St.-Gilles this frail woman sat down and in a firm hand, and in a foreign language, almost without a fault, wrote such a letter as this, one understands something of her nature. She gives a glimpse of the difficulties she had to overcome in order to found her school in a peculiarly conservative *milieu* where all was new and strange. She remembers some of the obscure but tragic conflicts that were going on in the souls of those whom she was directing. She had been a strong disciplinarian, a self-contained nature, which she had completely mastered, sternest always with herself; and in asking those girls, who may not always have understood her, to forgive what they may have considered her severity, she ends with the touching confession that she loved them more than they knew.*

PRISON DE ST.-GILLES.

MES CHÈRES NEURSES,—C'est un moment très triste pour moi quand je vous écris pour vous faire mes adieux. Il me fait rappeler que le 17 septembre a vu la fin des huit ans de mon direction de l'École. J'étais si heureuse d'être appelée à aider dans l'organisation de l'œuvre que notre comité venait de fonder. Le 1er octobre de l'année 1907 il n'y avait que 4 jeunes élèves, maintenant vous êtes déjà nombreuses, en tout entre 50 et 60, je pense, comptant celles qui sont diplômées et qui ont quittées l'École.

Je vous ai raconté à différents reprises ces premiers jours et les difficultés que nous avons rencontré, jusque dans le choix des mots pour vos heures "de service" et "hors de service" etc.; tout était nouveau dans la profession pour la Belgique.

Peu à peu un service après l'autre a été établi—les infirmières diplômées pour

She left several other letters, one for her mother in England, that were turned over to the German authorities to be delivered, but they were never delivered. Again and again I asked for them, begging to be allowed to send them to England to comfort the aged and sorrowing mother, but they refused to give them over. They said that if I were to send them to England they would be published abroad and another sensation created that would react against the German cause. I was able later to give them my word that they would not be published, that they would remain the sacred secret of the mother for whom they were intended; but no, they would not give them up—the

soigner dans les maisons particulières—les infirmières scolaires—l'hôpital St.-Gilles. Nous avons desservi l'Institut du Dr. Depage, le sanatorium de Buyssingham, le clinique du Dr. Mayer et maintenant beaucoup sont appelées (comme vous serez peut-être plus tard) à soigner les braves blessés de la guerre.

Si cette dernière année notre ouvrage a diminué la cause se trouve dans le triste temps par lequel nous passons, dans les jours meilleurs notre œuvre reprendra sa croissance et toute sa puissance pour faire du bien. Si je vous parle du passé c'est parce qu'il est bien quelque fois de s'arrêter pour contempler le chemin que nous avons traversé et pour nous rendre compte de nos erreurs et de notre progrès.

Dans votre belle maison vous aurez plus de malades et vous aurez tout ce qu'il faut pour leur confort et le vôtre.

À mon regret je n'ai pas pu toujours vous parler beaucoup en particulier; vous savez que j'ai eu assez d'occupations, mais j'espère que vous n'oublierez pas nos causeries du soir. Je vous ai dit que le dévouement vous rendrez un vrai bonheur—et la pensée que vous avez fait devant Dieu et vous-mêmes votre devoir entièrement et de bon cœur sera votre plus grand soutient dans les mauvais moments de la vie et en face de la mort.

Il y a deux ou trois de vous qui rappellerez les petits entretiens que nous avons eu ensemble; ne les oubliez pas. Étant déjà si loin dans la vie j'ai pu voir peut-être plus claire que vous et vous montrer le chemin droit. Un mot encore. Méfiez-vous du médisance! Puis-je vous dire—aimant votre pays de tout cœur—que c'est la grande faute ici. J'ai vu tant de malheurs depuis ces huit ans qu'on aurait pu éviter ou amoindrir si on n'avez pas soufflé un petit mot par-ci par-là, sans peut-être mauvaise intention—mais qui a ruiné la réputation le bonheur, même la vie de quelqu'un. Mes neurses ont toutes besoin de penser de cela et de cultiver parmi elles la loyauté et l'esprit de corps.

S'il y a une de vous qui à un grief contre moi je vous prie de le me pardonner; j'ai été peut-être quelquefois trop sévère mais jamais volontiers injuste, et je vous ai aimé toutes beaucoup, plus que vous ne croyez.

Mes souhaits pour le bonheur de toutes mes jeunes filles autant à celles qui ont quitté l'École qu'à celles qui s'y trouvent encore et merci pour la gentillesse que vous m'avez toujours témoigné.

10 *oct.* 1915. Votre directrice dévouée, EDITH CAVELL.

Translation

PRISON OF ST.-GILLES.

MY DEAR NURSES,—It is a very sad moment for me when I write to make my adieux to you. It calls to my mind the fact that the 17th September was the end of eight years of my direction of the school. I was so happy to be called to aid in the organization of the work that our committee had just founded. The 1st October of the year 1907 there were only four young students; now we

military would not consent. But the officer in whose keeping they were did have the grace to say to me finally:

"I wish I might give them to you; they are a very sad and uncomfortable charge for me to keep."

V. THE REACTION

WHY was Miss Cavell singled out among the others as the one to be shot at dawn on the morning after condemnation? Why, if justice, even rude military justice, were being done, were not all shot who had been condemned to death? Why this signal

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are already numerous—between fifty and sixty in all, I believe, counting those who have received their diplomas and have already left the school.

I have told you on various occasions of those first days and of the difficulties that we encountered, even in the choice of words for your hours "on duty" and "off duty," etc.; all was new in the profession in Belgium.

Bit by bit one service after another was established—graduate nurses to nurse in private houses, student nurses, the St.-Gilles hospital. We helped in the Institute of Dr. Depage, the sanatorium of Buyssingham [Buysinghen], the clinic of Dr. Mayer, and now many are called (as perhaps you will be later) to nurse the brave men wounded in the war.

If in this last year our work has diminished the cause is found in the sad time in which we live. In better days our work will resume its growth and all its power to do good. If I speak of the past it is because it is well sometimes to stop and look over the road that we have traversed and to take account of our mistakes and of our progress.

In your beautiful house you will have more patients and you will have all that is necessary for their comfort and your own.

To my regret I have not been able always to speak very much with you personally; you know that I have had a good many occupations, but I hope that you will not forget our evening chats. I told you that devotion would give you real happiness—and the thought that before God and yourselves you have done your entire duty with a good heart will be your greatest comfort in the hard moments of life and in the face of death.

There are two or three of you who will recall the little interviews that we have had together; do not forget them. Being already so far along in life, I have been able perhaps to see more clearly than you and to show you the straight path. One word more. Beware of gossip! And may I say to you—loving your country with all my heart—that that is the great fault here. I have seen so much evil during these eight years that could have been avoided or lessened if there had not been a little word whispered here and there, perhaps not with malicious intention—but it ruined the reputation and happiness, even the life of some one. My nurses should think of that and cultivate among themselves loyalty and esprit de corps.

If there is one among you whom I have wronged I beg you to forgive me; I have been perhaps too severe sometimes but never voluntarily unjust, and I have loved you all much more than you thought.

My best wishes for the happiness of all my girls, those who have left the school as well as those who are there still, and thank you for the kindness that you have always shown me.

Oct. 10, 1915. Your devoted directress, EDITH CAVELL.

distinction, this marked and tragic discrimination? Because Edith Cavell was English; that was her offence. And so they slew her, those generals with stars on their breasts and iron crosses, bestowed for bravery and gallantry—slew the nurse who had cared for their own wounded soldiers. They could not even await the unfolding of their own legal processes; they could not wait even the few days they had allotted to the Countess de Belleville, to Mademoiselle Thuliez, or to Severin the Belgian, although the Countess and Mademoiselle Thuliez, if all that is now known of the complot and the trial is true, were as deeply involved as Miss Cavell. They had been associated in a conspiracy, if the word may be employed, to aid British soldiers to escape; the only fact that saved the Princess de Croy was her declaration that after the men reached Brussels she did not know what became of them. But *Messieurs les militaires* must hide their intentions, perhaps even from their own colleagues in the Government of Occupation, and shuffle their frail victim out by stealth in the night, like midnight garrotters and gunmen, because she was English. The armies of Great Britain were just then making an offensive, and it was partly in petty spite for this, partly an expression of the violent hatred the Germans bore everything English, the savage feeling that had been fostered and kept alive and fanned into a furious flame by historians and Herr Professors and Herr Doktors and Herr Pastors, and editors with their editorials and harangues and hymns of hate, that they did what they did. It was in that spirit that they pronounced their judgment secretly in her prison cell and hurried her out and slew her before dawn should come and another day in which the voice of pity and of humanity could get itself heard. They could not wait for that, and they would not disturb Von Bissing there at his game of bridge in the château at Trois-Fontaines.

We were told that according to the German law, whatever that may mean, it was only the Military Governor in the jurisdiction in which the so-called crime had been committed who had the power to receive or to grant a plea for mercy. I do not know as to that; German military law seems to be whatever *Messieurs les militaires* are moved at the moment to call it. Von Sauberzweig said that he alone had the power to receive our plea for mercy, or even to grant a few hours' delay; he accepted the responsibility.

Baucq, the Brussels architect, was shot that morning because it would have been too bald, too patent, even from the Prussian viewpoint, to hurry out a woman all alone and kill her. And so it was Baucq's sinister luck to be chosen for a fate that might have been no worse than that of Severin, or the others whose lives were saved. Poor Baucq has not often been mentioned in connexion with this tragedy. He was no less illegally condemned, no less foully done to death, but his fate was swallowed up in the greater horror of the assassination of his companion of that tragic dawn at Etterbeek. He left a wife and two children. One of them was a little girl of twelve, who, several days after, went to a neighbour's and asked if she might come in and be alone for a while.

" I wish to weep for my father," she said, " but I do not like to do it before mamma ; I must be brave for her."

There were heroisms even among the Belgian children.

Miss Cavell, as I have said, did not deny having aided British soldiers and Belgian lads by giving them food and clothing and lodging and money. The thirty-five who were tried were said to be concerned in a combination of wide extent—more than seventy persons were said to be included in it—to help men over the frontier into Holland. More than seven thousand young men, it was said, had gone out during the months of June, July, and August.

Miss Cavell was ideally situated to aid such patriotic work. Her nursing home offered an exceptional *pied-à-terre.* The Germans had apparently convinced themselves, at least, that among the seventy whom they had arrested they had the ringleaders of a formidable organization and that they had undone the knot of the conspiracy that had been carrying on so extensively the work of recruiting for the Allied armies. They determined to break it up, and they employed their favourite weapon—*Fürchterlichkeit.* What would make a deeper impression on the mind, or instil greater fear in the hearts of the people, than to take a woman out and shoot her—this calm, courageous little woman with the stern lips and the keen grey eyes that were not afraid ? And then she was English—the unpardonable offence.

It is possible that the men at the Politische Abteilung did not know, that Monday afternoon, that the judgment had been pronounced. *Messieurs les militaires* had an affair in hand, and

they had set their hearts on carrying it out; and they may not have told them at the Politische Abteilung, may have kept the truth from their colleagues, or, with that contempt they always had for the civil department of government, may have warned them to keep their hands off. It may be that the Political Department did not care, or did not dare, to interfere. If the military party had deceived or ignored them, they, of course, in the solidarity and discipline that binds all Germans, would not have given that fact as an excuse. The excuse they did give was that Maître de Leval had led the American Legation into error, and that, anyway, even if Conrad had told Maître de Leval what he did tell him, neither Conrad nor Maître de Leval had any diplomatic quality, and that therefore the German authorities had not deceived the American Legation. The first excuse is not founded on fact, the second rests upon a distinction too trivial to give it any moral or legal value. Maître de Leval did not lead us into error; Conrad did tell him and did tell Topping, either honestly believing what he said or having been instructed to say—it must be one or the other or both—that no judgment had been rendered, when, as a matter of fact, that judgment had been rendered hours before.

There is a curious variance between the statements of the Germans that I have never been able to explain. The *affiche* of the German Government which announced the death of Miss Cavell begins: "*Par jugement du 9.octobre*" ("By judgment of the 9th October"). This statement as to the time of the rendition of the judgment is opposed to all the declarations made by the Germans to representatives of the Legation. Miss Cavell's trial took place on October 7 and 8, and on the 11th de Leval, Gibson, and Topping, who made inquiries, were informed that the judgment had not yet been pronounced and would not be pronounced for several days. The judgment, or the final and formal judgment, was not pronounced until the 11th, at 4.30 in the afternoon in the prison of St.-Gilles, and hours afterward Conrad again said that it had not been pronounced and would not be pronounced for a day or two. Either the *affiche* is mistaken or the officials at the Politische Abteilung were mistaken, or the phrase "*Par jugement du 9 octobre*" means something else in the German mind than it does in our minds. If the judgment was rendered on October 9 then the action of the Germans is even

more odious than ever, and could be explained on no hypothesis consistent with honourable conduct, for if the judgment were rendered on October 9, as the official announcement of the German Government states, then their verbal communications to the Legation of the 11th were unspeakable in their cynical disregard of facts. I am of the opinion that the judgment was rendered on October 11 and that the statement in the *affiche* is inexact, or else the action of the 9th was in the nature of a verdict and that of the 11th in the nature of a death sentence.

There were many stories of how the Princess and the Countess and Miss Cavell and the others were betrayed: there was the tale of the post card sent to Miss Cavell by the boy whose indiscreet gratitude betrayed his benefactor; there was another that would have it that there was a lad, a messenger somewhere down in the Borinage, who, angry because his pay was not at once forthcoming, betrayed his employers. And only lately I heard a fantastic tale to the effect that one of the accused was a somnambulist who talked in his sleep, and that the Germans, as always, strong on science and modern methods, hypnotized him and so obtained the facts. The story is hardly sufficient for our Anglo-Saxon notions of evidence, and others claimed that the explanation was somewhere to be found in another dark tragedy which some months later shocked that Brussels so accustomed to tragedy.

In the letter that Miss Cavell wrote to her nurses there is a reference to the evil of gossip which is of immense significance; not only were happiness and reputations destroyed by idleness, she says, but life itself sacrificed. It is not for me, or any one, to penetrate the sacred precincts of the brave soul of Edith Cavell in that solemn hour, but the references may have been, in part at least, due to the fact that she found herself condemned to death because of some unrestrained and indiscreet tongues that had betrayed her.

"It is no small prudence to keep silence in an evil time," she wrote in her copy of the "Imitation"—the most pathetic, perhaps, of all the lines she wrote, and the nearest expression of anything like reproach that she ever made.

I shall refer to that other tragedy in its place, but for us at the American Legation there was a sequel a week later. I had had Gibson's and de Leval's reports sent over to the American Embassy at London, and there they were turned over by our

Ambassador to the Foreign Office and given out to the Press for publication. They were published far and wide—and in consequence the *Rotterdamsche Courant* and the other Dutch newspapers were not allowed on sale in Brussels that next day. The closing of the frontier to newspapers was an invariable sign, well known in Brussels, that the Germans were not satisfied with the state of things, and we soon heard that the authorities were very angry and had even intimated that the Governor-General "might have to send all the diplomats away in consequence." It was, of course, the policy of terrorization transferred to the diplomatic field, but it was a menace that held few terrors for us. Our situation was not enviable.

The Germans had a copy of the London *Times* over at the Politische Abteilung, with our reports spread out in full through all its broad columns, and were greatly agitated. Even little Conrad, much moved, had exclaimed to Villalobar:

"*Ils m'ont mis dedans!*"

"*Très bien,*" said the Marquis, "*vous êtes devenu fameux, un des gros bonnets de l'Europe.*"

Then we heard that the German rage was especially directed against de Leval for having made a report at all, and that they threatened to send him to a concentration camp in Germany. That was on Saturday, the 23rd. I was convalescing; my physician had told me that I might go to work again, and I had made an appointment to see the Baron von der Lancken on the following Monday to discuss *la reprise du travail*—an appointment that had been postponed several times already by my illness. It was raining heavily when Monday came, and Dr. Derscheid came to give me a *piqûre* and to tell me not to go out; but I went.

The Baron von der Lancken, just from his morning ride, booted, with his Iron Cross and other ribbons, the white cross of St. John on his side, and a large dossier under his arm, received me with a dark, glowering face, asked me upstairs to his little workroom where a fire was burning, and when seated he began solemnly:

"*Je suis très peiné d'être obligé de vous faire la communication que . . .*"

And then he went on to say that the diplomats had remained in Brussels by courtesy of the Germans, that the publication of

my report in the Cavell case was a great injustice to Germany and a breach of diplomatic etiquette, that our Legation was furnishing an arm to England, Germany's enemy, that it was an unneutral act, etc. All these observations and others like them were conveyed in phrases that were diplomatically correct, but in the manner of conveying them there was an evident feeling and I know not what of irritation and resentment that revealed or reflected the temper of *Messieurs les militaires*, smarting, no doubt, under the sting of that universal opprobrium which had surprised them with its lash, and of course trying in their rage to shift the blame for a deed the consequences of which they had apparently been unable to foresee. It was, as I have already reported, a habit, I might almost say a policy of theirs, to open discussions that involved their manners and morals in a way that was intended to put their opponents or their interlocutors at once in the wrong, and I interrupted the Baron then, and he adopted a less emphatic tone.

"Let us talk the matter over unofficially and in a friendly way, and try to reach some conclusion," he said.

This was better, and we discussed the case in all its bearings. He had copies of the *Times* and of the *Morning Post* before him, marked with red and blue pencils. His objections, it soon developed, were not to the report so much as to the fact that the report had been published, though by reason of what he alleged as misstatements in de Leval's report he himself had been accused of having broken his promise. He said that I, officially, as American Minister, had not made frequent inquiries, that it was de Leval who had spoken to Conrad, and that neither de Leval nor Conrad had any diplomatic quality. What he wished then, at the end, was that I express regret at the publication and that de Leval instantly be dismissed from the Legation; otherwise he could not be responsible for what would happen to him. Already the military had threatened to arrest and deport him.

To this I replied that I was responsible for de Leval and for his actions, that I would not dismiss him, and that my Legation would be his asylum if any effort were made to molest him.

"You don't think me capable of throwing him to the wolves and letting this Sauberzweig eat him alive!" I exclaimed.

And as for regrets, I said that I would not express any, nor make any statement unless instructed by my Government so to do.

We talked calmly and frankly perhaps as never before, both recognizing in our conversation the fact that the relations between our Governments were still strained over the *Lusitania* case. We spoke of the *ravitaillement*, and the danger involved to it in any disagreement; but even so, I said, rather than seem to shirk any responsibility or to abandon de Leval, I should prefer to withdraw from Belgium. At this he protested, begged me not to mention such a thing, suggested that Villalobar join the discussion—to which I consented, of course, with pleasure—and we parted, to meet again that afternoon. And in the end he shook hands twice and inquired solicitously about my health.

At three o'clock that afternoon, in the yellow *salon* downstairs, the Baron and the Marquis and I met, and Baron von der Lancken outlined the whole subject again; on the table before him were copies of the London newspapers, with the *Graphic*, or some illustrated journal, containing my portrait and one of Villalobar—the Marquis in a yachting-cap, at Cowes—thirty years before, he said with a sigh.

Baron von der Lancken was especially bitter against de Leval. He said that de Leval was *persona non grata*, and that his presence compromised our neutrality. I told him that of course if de Leval was *persona non grata* he could be eliminated, though not as a punishment, and only after communication with Washington.

We talked all afternoon—a terrible afternoon. I was weary and depressed—weary of the long strain, weary of negotiations in French of all accents, and I was still seedy and under the horror of that awful night. The cold rain was falling in the Park. . . . The Baron was anxious and even insistent that I make a statement, in writing, that would absolve the German authorities by admitting inaccuracies in the report made by de Leval and express regret at its publication; he had a sheet of paper and a pencil ready to write it all down. But I declined to make such a statement or any statement or to authorize any expression in the nature of an excuse, a disavowal, or a regret.

So it was left. Van Vollenhoven was waiting to join us in the discussion of the *reprise du travail*. He came in and I hurried the business through; every one, indeed, was tired except Van Vollenhoven, and possibly Villalobar, who seemed never to get tired.

The next day Baron von der Lancken went to Munich. The Governor-General had gone to Berlin. The President and the

King of Spain had made appeals to the Government at Berlin on behalf of the Countess de Belleville and Mademoiselle Thuliez, and Villalobar and I felt that their lives were saved, at any rate. And Severin, who was a Freemason, had friends who were working in his behalf. Some one brought to the Legation and committed to my care Miss Cavell's Prayer Book, with its touching entries,* written in her own hand, firmly, that last night, with the verses of Scripture that had given her comfort, and then, last entry

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NOTES IN MISS CAVELL'S "IMITATION OF CHRIST"

p. 124. *It is no small prudence to keep silence in an evil time.* Chapter XXIX, p. 125, and Chapter XXX, p. 126 (Psalm xxx). Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord thou God of truth.

p. 502. 'Twas the last watch of night,
Except what brings the morning quite
When the armed angel, conscience-clear,
His task nigh done, leans o'er his spear
And gazes on the earth he guards
Till God relieves him at his post.

p. 170. So shalt thou keep one and the same countenance always with thanksgiving, both in prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equal balance.

p. 58. Man considereth the deeds but God weigheth the intentions.

p. 36. Thou must pass thro' fire and water before thou come to the place of refreshing.

p. 22. Occasions of adversity best discover how great virtue or strength each one hath.

p. 108. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience.

p. 102. Grant me above all things that can be desired to rest in Thee and in Thee to leave my heart at peace.

Thou art the true peace of the heart; Thou its only rest; out of Thee all things are hard and restless. In this very peace that is in Thee, the one Chiefest Eternal good, I will sleep and rest. *Amen.*

p. 62. Be pure and free within and entangle not thy heart with any creature.

p. 54. It were more than just that thou shouldst accuse thyself and excuse thy brother.

NOTATIONS IN MISS CAVELL'S PRAYER BOOK

Arrested, 5 Aug. 1915
Prison de St.-Gilles, 7th Aug. 1915
Brussels
Court martialed, 7th Oct, 1915
" " 8 " "
Condemned to death, 8th Oct.
In the Salle des Députés at 10.30 a.m. (h.a.)
with 4 others. (The accused numbéred in all
70, of whom 34 were present on these 2 dates.)
Died at 7 a.m. on Oct. 12th, 1915.
E. Cavell
With love to
E. D. Cavell

of all—written while she was yet alive and life still pulsing within her, when, in a world otherwise ordered, long years of devoted service might have been hers—the legend, the epitaph that need not yet have been :

" Died at 7 a.m. on Oct. 12th, 1915."

There were a few francs and a few precious trinkets, all her poor little belongings. And yet—how vast, how noble, how rich an estate !

The modest English nurse whose strange fate it was to be so suddenly summoned from the dim wards of sickness and of pain to a place among the world's heroes and martyrs will have, in happier, freer times, her monument in Brussels ; some street or public place will bear her name, the school she founded will be called after her and continue her mission of healing in the earth. And when the horror of her cruel and unjust fate shall have faded somewhat in the light of its emergent sacrifice, the few lines she wrote and the simple words she spoke as she was about to die will remain to reveal the heights that human nature may attain, and to sanctify a memory that will be revered as long as faith and honour are known to men.

VI. THE VON SAUBERZWEIG REGIME

THE doctor had been there again that Wednesday morning with his *piqûres*. My motor, like every other institution in the world, was broken down, and I had not been out of doors. I had been working on a dispatch, trying to inform Washington of all those complicated events. I was still under the horror of it all and depressed, and after dinner that evening Miss Larner sent up word that a cipher cablegram had come. There is a certain nervous suspense about a cipher telegram, especially when one is used to receiving so much bad news ; the words, the phrases come forth so slowly, with such long and painful pauses, while the clerks rustle the leaves of the code, turning them over and scowling and finally writing down some absurd *non sequitur*. . . .

There was a diplomat, a Minister I used to know, who received one night a cipher dispatch, and one by one the words came forth :

"You—are—promoted——"

His heart began beating wildly. . . .

"—an—ambassador——"

He was all radiant; it was the moment for which he had been waiting and working for so many years, the supreme moment of his career. What would the next cipher groups say? Would it be London or Paris or Rome or Washington?

But I forgot; the dispatch, of course, was in French:

"*Sa Majesté me donne pour ordre d'informer Votre Excellence qu'Elle est avancée au grade d'Ambassadeur——*"

And, as I was saying, he hung on the next word. When it came it was:

"*—honoraire.*"

Only Honorary Ambassador then! And the calm groups disclosed their cruel fate:

"—and retired from the service."

This night, then, with none but the most confused notions of what the world was thinking and saying of the Cavell case, we deciphered the dispatch, and it proved to be from Mr. Lansing, and, like all his dispatches, most thoughtful, generous, and kind:

> The Department learns that your health is not good and realizing the responsibility and the strain under which you have been working, informs you that if you so desire you may take advantage of the leave of absence to which you are entitled and visit the United States. The manner in which you have discharged your duties is highly appreciated.

There are not many moments in a man's life like that; far better than all the *piqûres* in the world!

I went up those three flights of stairs at the jump—and the doctors say that one should not do that after one is forty-five. But to see America! That land where men know liberty and love truth and honour and respect women; where there are courts and laws and orderly processes and the traditions of the liberties of a thousand years; where the Dark Ages exist only in books to be read by the fire on winter nights, when one is weary of the manuscript on the table—that land where, in Ibsen's impressionistic and all-embracing phrase, "a freer air blows over the people."

My Government had not learned from me that I was ill; the news had got over into Holland and had been published at

The Hague. I should never have asked for leave, and now, with that perversity that is implicit in human nature, when it had come unasked I could regret that I no longer felt the need of it.

And I could not leave just then. That very next morning there was another *affiche* on the walls, among *Les Nouvelles publiées par le Gouvernement allemand.* It was an amazing *affiche*, in view of my interview with Baron von der Lancken, but we were beyond amazement by that time. This was the *affiche:*

BRUSSELS, *October* 27.

The Ambassador of the United States at London has placed at the disposition of the English Government papers relating to the Cavell affair. These papers include the correspondence on the subject of the trial exchanged between the Legation of the United States at Brussels and the German authorities in that city. The English Government immediately gave these documents to the Press and had them published by Reuter's Agency. They reported the most essential facts in an inexact manner. They made it appear, especially, that the German authorities had, by false promises, put off the United States Minister and kept him ignorant of the fact that the death sentence had already been pronounced, and, by proceeding rapidly with the execution, prevented him from intervening in favour of the accused.

In the comments published at the same time on this subject, Sir Edward Grey considers particularly reprehensible the fact that the German authority did not respect its engagement to keep the United States Minister informed of the progress of the trial. Such a promise was never given by the German authority, which, consequently, could not have broken its word. The Minister of the United States in Brussels, in the course of an interview with the German authority, himself recognized that such was the case. The Ambassador of the United States in London has been misinformed; he has been led into error by the report of a Belgian lawyer who, in his quality of legal adviser to the American Legation in Brussels, has played a certain part in this affair. The United States Minister has declared that the publication of the documents in question had greatly surprised him, and that without delay he would apprise his colleague in London and his Government of the differences existing between the actual facts and the story published in the report written by the Belgian lawyer.*

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* The French text:

BRUXELLES, *le 27 octobre,*

L'ambassadeur des États-Unis à Londres a mis à la disposition du gouvernement anglais des pièces relatives à l'affaire Cavell. Ces pièces se rapportent à la correspondence échangée au sujet de ce procès entre la légation des États-Unis à Bruxelles et les autorités allemandes de cette ville. Le gouvernement anglais a livré aussitôt ces documents à la presse et les a fait publier par l'agence Reuter. Ils reproduisent les faits les plus essentiels d'une manière inexacte. Ils font surtout supposer que les autorités allemandes ont, par de vaines promesses, fait patienter le ministre des États-Unis pour lui laisser ignorer que la condamnation

It made its sensation. There were some who came to see me about it, and they added to the difficulty of the situation because they wished me to begin issuing statements and placarding *affiches* myself, to "*opposer le dementi le plus formel*" on the walls of Brussels. I trust that I was patient with them and recognized them as belonging to that order of mentality which thinks that the truth is affected by statements concerning it, and that only he is in the right who has the last and the loudest word. An old bit of epigrammatic philosophy came to my mind; I used to keep it on the wall of my office when I was mayor, to show to reporters: Elbert Hubbard wrote it, or found it somewhere; it sounds like a modern version of Emerson's advice about apologies:

> Never explain; your friends do not require it and your enemies will not believe you anyway.

Perhaps my friends did not quite understand it, because it does not adapt itself any more readily to translation into their language than it seemed to accord with their customs—which still embrace the *code d'honneur*. What I kept uppermost in my mind and before my eyes then, as during all those months and years in Belgium, was the *ravitaillement*. Explanations, and especially denials of German statements, could wait, but not the seven million hungry mouths.

"*Mais,*" they would say, "*de Leval.*"

They were troubled about the reflections the Germans had made on de Leval's veracity. It would seem that German official statements should have been estimated at their proper value in Belgium at that time, and by the vast majority of people

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à mort eût été déjà prononcée et, en procédant rapidement à l'exécution, l'empêcher d'intervenir en faveur des condamnés.

Dans les commentaires publiés également à ce sujet, sir Edouard Grey considère comme particulièrement répréhensible le fait que l'autorité allemande n'a pas respecté son engagement de tenir le ministre des États-Unis au courant de la marche du procès. Une telle promesse n'a jamais été donnée par l'autorité allemande qui, par conséquent, n'a pu manquer à sa parole. Le ministre des États-Unis à Bruxelles, au cours d'un entretien avec l'autorité allemande, a reconnu lui-même qu'il en était ainsi. L'ambassadeur des États-Unis à Londres a été mal informé; il a été induit en erreur par les rapports d'un jurisconsulte belge qui, en sa qualité d'avocat-conseil de la légation américaine à Bruxelles, a joué un certain rôle dans cette affaire. Le ministre des États-Unis a déclaré que la publication des documents en question l'avait fort surpris et qu'il instruirait sans retard son collègue de Londres et son gouvernement des différences existant entre les faits réels et leur exposé dans le rapport écrit de l'avocat belge.

they were—by nearly all, indeed, except the few fatuous *naïfs*. The Germans had tried to make the world believe, and by innuendoes and suggestions they had tried to make it appear that I had said—when I had refused to make and had not made any statement whatever—that de Leval had misled me, that the published report was inexact; whereas it would seem quite needless to say that de Leval had not misled me and that his report was wholly and meticulously accurate, and that if it erred at all it was on the side of generosity. I do not know who was responsible for the *affiche*; Lancken had gone to Munich. And I was troubled about something more important in de Leval's case just then—namely, his liberty; perhaps, as was conceivable, his very life. The Germans had concentrated all their anger on him; there were threats of arrest, of imprisonment, of deportation. The Maître himself took it all calmly enough, but I felt that it would not be safe for him to remain in Belgium. I longed to see him away, and so reported to Washington.

It was a difficult moment in which to adjust such delicate matters. A thick cloud of terror, of hate, the emanation of the abominable deed, had settled over the town. Von Sauberzweig had a new *affiche* on the walls before which groups of people stood aghast.

On the Sunday before that awful Monday of the tragedy an aeroplane of the Allies had flown over Brussels. Marie had come up to my sick-room to tell me. She had seen the aeroplane; there had been *un grand monde* on the Avenue de Tervueren: "*Il filait à travers les coups de feu; il payait d'audace; mais on ne l'a pas atteint; il s'est échappé—tout petit, tout petit, comme un moineau!*"

Then on that Monday another aviator, it was said, had dropped bombs on Berghem, where there was a hangar for the Zeppelins, though some said it was at Jette near by, where asphyxiating-bombs were said to be manufactured. The city was excited until the tragedy of the Cavell case overwhelmed all other thought, and thus the aviators were forgotten by the Belgians, but not by the Germans, and the new *affiche* recalled to the Belgians those aerial visitors. The *affiche* menaced the population with reprisals if the Allies' aviators threw any more bombs near Brussels, urged people to spy on each other, and threatened to lodge troops on

the inhabitants, to escape which inconvenience the city of Brussels had to pay so many million francs the year before. The *affiche* announced that the promise not to quarter troops would be "annulled." *

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* The French text:

AVIS

1. Presque journellement, dans les divers quartiers de la ville, on découvre des armes et des munitions, bien que les habitants aient, à différentes reprises, reçu l'ordre de les remettre à l'autorité allemande. J'ordonne encore une fois que toutes les armes et toutes les munitions désignées dans l'avis du 10 janvier 1915 de Son Excellence le Gouverneur général, soient remises aux autorités compétentes, à moins que leurs détenteurs n'aient reçu une dispense spéciale des autorités allemandes.

Si, après le 25 octobre 1915, des habitants sont encore trouvés en possession d'armes ou de munitions du genre susmentionné, je serai porté à croire qu'elles sont destinées à être employées contre les autorités et les troupes allemandes. Si la conduite du détenteur est considérée comme trahison commise pendant l'état de guerre, il sera passible de la peine de mort ou de 10 ans au moins de travaux forcés. On appliquera aussi l'arrêté du 1er octobre de Son Excellence le Gouverneur général concernant la défense de cacher des explosifs. En outre toute commune dans le territoire de laquelle on trouvera, après le 25 octobre 1915, des armes ou des munitions prohibées, se verra imposer une contribution de guerre pouvant aller jusqu'à 10,000 mark pour chaque cas.

2. Dans les derniers temps, des aviateurs ennemis ont, à diverses reprises, choisi comme but de leurs attaques des bâtiments occupés par des soldats allemands. Il est hors de doute que l'emplacement de ces bâtiments et leur occupation par des soldats allemands ont été signalés à l'ennemi par des habitants. Toute la population est responsable d'une telle manière d'agir, car, ne fût-ce que dans leur propre intérêt, les habitants ont l'obligation de se surveiller les uns les autres. Si donc les aviateurs ennemis attaquent encore des bâtiments occupés, ainsi que les soldats qui les occupent, je serai obligé afin de surveiller de plus près les habitants de l'agglomération bruxelloise et d'empêcher l'espionnage, de loger des troupes allemandes dans des maisons particulières. *Dans ce cas, la promesse, faite autrefois, de ne pas loger d'officiers ni de soldats allemands chez des particuliers sera annulée.*

Cette promesse sera également retirée si, après le 25 octobre 1915, *des armes ou des munitions prohibées (voir premier alinéa) sont encore trouvées en possession de certains habitants de l'agglomération bruxelloise.*

BRUXELLES, *le* 16 *octobre*, 1915. VON SAUBERZWEIG, *Général-Major.*

Translation

NOTICE

1. Almost daily in various quarters of the city there are discovered arms and ammunition, although the inhabitants have on different occasions been ordered to hand them in to the German authorities. Once more I order that all arms and ammunition designated in His Excellency the Governor-General's notice of January 10 be handed in to competent authorities, unless their holders have received a special permit from the German authorities.

If, after October 25, 1915, any inhabitants are still in possession of arms and ammunition of the kind above mentioned I shall be forced to believe that they are intended to be used against the German authorities and troops. If the conduct of the holder is considered to be treason in time of war he will be punished with death or with at least ten years at hard labour. His Excellency the Governor-General's warning of October 1 concerning the prohibition of hiding explosives will also be enforced. Furthermore, each

The population, as it had been at all times, was dignified, self-possessed, and calm under this new affront. As a result of the *affiche* of October 12 Belgian soldiers and French soldiers presented themselves by the hundreds at the Rue de Méridien and were sent off to Germany. Many of them had been *réformés* after having been wounded, and had returned to Belgium in response to the invitation of Von Bissing; many of the French had set up little shops, were in business in a small way, trying to reorganize their lives. And thus there was another broken vow, another promise "annulled."

The gossips of the town would have it just then that Von Bissing was no longer the real power in Belgium, and that he had gone to Berlin to have Von Sauberzweig removed. The gossips knew no more than gossips usually do, but if they were not well informed the same might be said of the Germans, who depended upon their spies for what they knew. I suppose it would do no very great injustice to the spies and informers in any service to say that they find what they think their employers wish them to find, and the German ranks were recruited from German *apaches*, who obtained most of their information from Belgian *apaches*. The Germans in authority, always obsessed by the fear of spies and plots and conspiracies, did not understand the Belgians, their life, or their character. They could not understand the communal organization of Belgium, or the communal pride. I was told, for instance, that when M. Lemonnier, the Burgomaster, went to see General von Sauberzweig he was ordered to speak in German, a language M. Lemonnier did not know. In such circumstances the regime that seemed to be established coinci-

commune in whose territory are found, after October 25, 1915, prohibited arms or ammunition, will have imposed upon it a contribution of war of not more than 10,000 marks in each case.

2. Enemy aviators have recently on several occasions chosen as the object of their attack buildings occupied by German soldiers. There is no doubt that the location of these buildings and the fact of their occupation by German soldiers is signalled to the enemy by the inhabitants. The entire population is responsible for such conduct because the inhabitants are under obligation to watch one another, if only in their own interest. Therefore, if the enemy aviators attack the occupied buildings again, or the soldiers who occupy them, I shall be obliged, in order to watch more closely the inhabitants of Greater Brussels and to prevent espionage, to lodge German troops in private houses *In this case the promise made before not to lodge German officers or soldiers in private houses will be annulled.*

This promise will be similarly annulled if, after October 25, 1915, forbidden arms or munitions (see statement above) are still found in the possession of certain inhabitants of Greater Brussels.

BRUSSELS, *October* 16, 1915. VON SAUBERZWEIG, *Major-General.*

dentally with the arrival of General von Sauberzweig, whose debut was the Cavell case, and with these new and harsh measures following on, caused many to fear that the population might be pushed to the verge of revolt.

I never met General von Sauberzweig, and I would not do him an injustice. He was described to me as a tall, very powerful, and very handsome man, agreeable to meet and quite human. Perhaps he was as good as he looked. I say only that these things were coincidental with his advent to the tremendously influential post of Military Governor in Brussels. Whoever may have been responsible, the terror and gloom of his regime affected the whole atmosphere of Brussels.

The Germans were just then in that nervous state that always accompanied any important military movement. The great autumn offensive had its reaction on their nerves. There were not so many officers as there had been swanking along the boulevards, and there were none dashing about the city in snorting motor-cars; they were all at the front, and petrol and rubber were growing scarce. The war was not the joy-ride it had been a year before.

Those still at the comfortable rear—and Brussels was a post much sought after—were justifying their employment by redoubled activity. They made perquisitions everywhere; even the delegates of the C.R.B. were not spared. One afternoon two German spies made a raid on the apartment of Mr. Lewis Richards and Mr. Robinson Smith in the Rue St.-Boniface. The two men were away, and the concierge was forced by the two German police agents to open the apartment. The concierge sent word to the Legation, and Gibson went with Richards, told the agents what he thought of them, and then urged them to search. They turned everything upside down and, to their evident regret, found nothing. The indignities to which the Germans from time to time subjected our delegates were very great, and yet not one of all the scores who had been there had ever been detected, by Americans or Germans, doing a wrong or incorrect thing.

I have spoken of the theatres, those of the lower order, that had sprung up to afford entertainment for the Germans—for no self-respecting Belgian would attend. They gave for the most part low revues that appealed to the underworld and to those who mentally and morally were of the underworld. But even

the miserable actors—who, poor things, had to make a living some way—were ill-treated for their efforts to entertain their oppressors. At the Winter Palace two *soi-disant* comedians were giving impersonations: one of them put a red handkerchief to his throat as though it were a cravat, to impersonate Lebargy, of the Comedie Française; this done, he threw his red handkerchief on the floor and began to thrust a white napkin up his sleeve after the fashion of André Brulé, then tossed the napkin on the stage; then he took off his black coat and threw that on the floor; and then he and his partner boxed, and as they did so they stepped, of course, on the three articles, black, white, and red, thus discarded. German officers complained at headquarters that they had trampled the German colours underfoot, and the actors were duly punished.

At the Théâtre des Galeries a little theatrical company was playing a French detective piece, a dramatization of that poor French imitation of "Sherlock Holmes" known as "Arsène Lupin." The action of the play was supposed to be contemporaneous, and the actors wore such costumes as they could procure, those of the style—if it could be called a style—of 1917. In a trial scene the judge asks:

"*Quand est-ce que le premier vol a été commis?*"

And one of the personages answers:

"*Il y a trois ans, au mois d'août* 1905."

The actor who was playing this part thought that to be dressed in costumes of 1917 and to say "three years ago, in 1905," involved a solecism that offended his artistic sensibilities, and he had a brilliant idea. One night he replied spontaneously:

"*Il y a trois ans, au mois d'août* 1914."

There were Germans present, of course, and as a result the play was suspended, the actors fined, and the theatre dark.

But there were instances of nobler suffering. I heard of two French officers, in an aeroplane, who had to descend in the province of Limbourg. They went to the home of a teacher, from him borrowed civilian clothes, and in them made their way to the Holland frontier, near Maestricht; there they were arrested by the Germans and taken before the Kommandant. He would have them shot as spies, but they told him that they had come within the enemy's lines not as spies, but as officers in uniform, described the accident to their aeroplane,

and offered—if he would give his word of honour not to punish the man who had helped them—to take him to the school and there show him their uniforms. The Kommandant gave his word of honour not to do anything to the professor, and went with them. They showed their uniforms and made their case—and the professor was condemned by the Germans to ten years at hard labour.

Not one of those autumn days, with their thick fog, that did not bring forth its instance of injustice suffered, sometimes quick and dramatic, sometimes slow and in agony long endured.

It was so with Le Jeune, the barber. They came one morning to tell me of his end. He had come a short while before to sell me some engravings, almost the last of his possessions. Then a little later he came to say that the Germans were pursuing him. I had sent him away with a word of reassurance—rather casually, I fear now. They told me that he had had a *crise de folie* a few nights before. For some time he had had the illusion of persecution; he thought every man's hand was against him and that the Germans were about to take him to the Kommandantur. Then suddenly one night he sat up in bed, with burning, staring eyes, and pointing his finger into the darkness where he beheld some horror, he cried:

"*Oui, oui! Sont là! Ils commencent! Ils commencent!*"

"*Quoi?*" asked his wife.

"*L'échafaud! L'échafaud! Ils ne peuvent pas me tuer! Il faut chercher le Ministre! Qu'il me protège!*"

The startled wife got up, called a policeman, a kindly Belgian, who assured Le Jeune that he would go with him to find me, and so took him to the Hôpital St.-Jean. The physicians the next day said that his condition was hopeless, and he was taken to an asylum.

Poor Le Jeune! His case was obscure enough, and with nothing of the heroic in it, save as there was a touching heroism in the cases of all those Belgians who anonymously suffered. He was no less a victim of the war, one of those countless thousands whose lives were brought prematurely to an end by the sheer horror of it. It was another instance of war's extravagant waste of human life. And who shall compute the waste of life even among those who lived on, and yet who saw life slipping by all

unfulfilled? But then it seems that such things must be in this world, in order that emperors may have glory and their dynasties immortality in printed books called histories.

VII. HOMEWARD BOUND

One morning in the Rue de Trèves, there before the Legation, I saw Horace Fletcher, in a great buff overcoat, a cream-coloured hat on his white hair, and a large yellow autumn leaf in his mouth. He was methodically Fletcherizing the stem of the brilliant autumn leaf, deriving therefrom I know not what sustenance, but at sight of me he removed it from his mouth, having come for a talk. He was very enthusiastic about the feeding of Belgium and anxious to go back to America to create sentiment for another Christmas ship for the children. He had found himself in Brussels at the beginning of the war and had worked as a member of the C.R.B. as an expert in food value, and while I should hardly be justified in saying that he had convinced the Belgians that if they would Fletcherize their food they would make it go further, he had rendered the C.R.B. many valuable services. The Belgians preferred to Hooverize their food—to use the verb which has been made of the name of another American. However, his visit put in my mind again the thought that had been lurking there ever since that kindly cablegram had been deciphered that night when I had felt that I could go no further.

There was still much to do, and the situation had this difficult character: that one incident was hardly disposed of before another had developed. We were all near the breaking-point; Villalobar was just then having a terrible time trying to save the lives of a Spaniard and a Frenchwoman condemned to death at Liége. Those dark days of soft, fine rain were surcharged with sorrow; I have the memory of the crowds of humble faces in the black of the universal mourning, streaming along the roadside under the dripping poplars toward the cemetery on the edge of the town on All Saints' Day. But I have happier memories, too, as of that evening when Dr. Derscheid said that since I could not go to Mont Dore for the cure, as in other circumstances he would have advised, he would prescribe music, and he himself provided it in the most delightful form by bringing the

Quatuor Zimmer to the Legation to play for us. We made an intimate little group, and had a satisfaction almost royal in the situation while they played such things as Beethoven's *Quatuor*, Op. 18, No. 6, *Si* b *majeur*, and the *Scherzo* and the *Andante* of Debussy's *Premier quatuor*, and a bit by the Russian Borodin.

Indeed, the kindness of those Belgian friends seemed ever to increase in the proportion that their own sorrows increased. Their gratitude was almost embarrassing at times; once I admired a painting in a gentleman's *salon*—the next day it arrived at the Legation with the gentleman's compliments! And it seemed almost a desertion to go away, even for a little holiday, when the others could have no holiday. When I spoke of it to Villalobar he said at once:

"Go;" and then he shook his head sadly and said:

"Life is hard."

I speak of these little personal things in the effort to make clear how very close suffering brought us; it made of Belgium almost a nation of comrades.

Finally there came a telegram from Washington approving of my suggestion in regard to de Leval's difficulties, and I arranged the passports that permitted him to go to Holland, whence he was to cross to England.

It was of the inveterate irony of things that newspapers outside should have chosen that very moment to print sensational statements that the Germans wished to have me out of Belgium and away from Brussels. The Baron von der Lancken showed them to me, and added that he wished to state officially that there was no ground for such statements; and when I told him that I was going home for a little vacation he hesitated a moment, then asked frankly if my going had anything to do with—the little difficulty of a few days before. It had not, as I told him. Then, a few days later, my passes and *au revoir*.

Even if one does not need a vacation and prepares to take one, one will need it after the ordeal of getting ready to go. Those November days were full of preparations, but a morning came—grey, overcast, and cold—when, after the farewells of the *chers collègues*, we drove away from the Legation and out of Brussels and to Vilvorde, between fields obscured by the silvery fog that rolled over them, and along the familiar road to Malines and to Antwerp, halted by sentinels at each town. After Antwerp,

the flat, monotonous Campine Anversoisé—sand and stunted pine-woods recalling on every hand pictures by Courtens—and on to Campenhout, the first outpost of the frontier. We were halted and our papers examined and *viséd*; a few rods farther on we were halted again by the familiar red flag and a bar across the road, the first of the controls. The bar was raised and a soldier waved us on, the bar was let down behind us and another let down before, and thus imprisoned, a red-headed *sous-officier* took our papers and went into a little shack, like those in the Far West, of wood and tarred paper; he was gone a long time, telephoning, signing, and otherwise regulating and regimentating. But when he came out he smiled and saluted; the telephone from Von der Lancken at the Politische Abteilung had been before us and worked its wonders. We turned then down a lonely broken road in a barren, sandy, tragic waste of country, overgrown with scrubby pines, and drove along the frontier with its three high fences of wire—the two outer barriers of barbed wire, but the middle higher than the others, far more forbidding, with its gleaming wires stretched taut on insulators, wires that had dealt their deadly bolts to many a brave Belgian lad. The grey soldiers patrolling the long lines of wire looked at us with their usual suspicion until we turned northward again toward the frontier, to be halted at the wires in a lonely wood where the sentinel was building himself a little rustic *guérite* of the branches of pine-trees. On the electric wires beside the double gates of this barrier there was a sign, with a zigzagging symbol of lightning over the warnings it gave in German, Dutch, Flemish, and French, that the wires were charged with electricity—"*haute tension*"—and then, with the lack of humour that distinguished the Germans, unless it was a humour as grim as the warriors who employed it, the words "*danger de mort.*" . . .

The sentinel gave us back our papers, opened the gates, and we drove through, a young officer in puttees smoking a cigarette saluting us from the door of a little cottage in the woods. Surely this was all—we must be in Holland; but no, we were halted again at Esschen, where there was a custom-house and German sentinels and the German flag, and across the line the Dutch flag, and two Dutch soldiers in their dark grey uniforms chatting with the German sentry across the line. When at last the *sous-officier* brought out our papers and saluted stiffly, and when I

had distributed the last of my cigars to the German and Dutch soldiers, we rolled across the line and into Holland.

And then, suddenly, out of that grey, lowering sky, the sun burst forth and bathed all that lovely Holland scene in golden light. We were strangely moved. It was with a sense of calm, of peace, of repose, such as I had never known, that we rolled over the smooth roads along the dykes, with the windmills and the pretty homesteads, and Dutch soldiers on bicycles or walking with girls, joking, laughing, having a prodigious holiday. We loitered over our luncheon in the little inn at Rozendael; every one was interested in Mieke, my wife's faithful little Pekingese dog, and a Dutch maid, astounded as Marie talked to the intelligent little thing, said in all seriousness:

"*Kan zy praten?*" ("Can she talk?")

The sun was going down across the low fields and stars were gleaming in the clear sky as we drove on to the ferry at Moerdijk to cross the Hollandsch Diep to Dordrecht, and so at last to Rotterdam, strange and bewildering, with its streets ablaze with electric lights, its shops all open, and tramcars and taxis and happy people, engaged in homely, common tasks or thronging the sidewalks in careless freedom, laughing and singing, coming and going and doing as they pleased, just as if there were no Germans in the world. It quite overwhelmed us for a moment, it was so strange, so wonderful, to see a city full of free people, living normal lives. And I realized with a shock how soon and easily one loses the use and habit of liberty; and then I inhaled rapturously that air of Holland, heavy, moist, with the odours of shipping and the sea, but free—for three centuries and a half, free!

It was too late and we were too tired to drive on that night to The Hague, where Dr. van Dyke was awaiting us. We went to an hotel, and all that night and far into the next morning I slept and slept and slept.

VIII. BACK IN BRUSSELS

After a month in America we were back in Brussels, as I had announced that I should be, the second week in January, and there seemed to be an added warmth in our welcome because it

had been assumed that I had gone to return no more. No one in this old and disillusioned and cynical Europe ever believes anything a diplomatist says, but seeks in his utterances every meaning save that which they would seem to have been framed to convey. M. Lemonnier, the Burgomaster, called the next morning after our arrival, and the look in his eyes was of that surprise which I read in the eyes of all I met. The newspapers at Brussels were not permitted to publish the fact of my return; the notices they wrote were sent back with the blue pencil of the German censor drawn through them. But there I was, at any rate, and for many reasons glad to be back in Brussels.

The daughter of the old bookseller in the Rue de la Tulipe, when I went to see what new old editions of the French masters had been relinquished by private libraries during my absence. stared at me with wide, sceptical eyes.

"*Monsieur le Ministre!*" she cried. "*Est-ce vrai?*"

"*Oui.*"

"*Et Monsieur le Ministre est à Bruxelles de nouveau?*"

"*Evidemment, puisque vous me voyez ici.*"

But though I had been away so short a time, there were changes. Old M. Lamertin, the bookseller in the Montagne de la Cour, had passed away during my absence, and Le Jeune the barber, who had been taken to an asylum for the insane during those dark days of October, had died there. And to make up the arrears one had to learn who had been sent to prison or deported. In that respect Brussels had not changed; perhaps the city was a little sadder, that was all. The Military Governor had "annulled," as he had threatened to do, the promise that had been made to the city in the convention of 1914 not to quarter troops on the inhabitants,* and a new contribution had been

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AVIS

En me référant à mon avis du 16 octobre dernier, je porte à la connaissance du public que des armes et des munitions ont encore été trouvées après le 25 octobre dans divers quartiers de l'agglomération bruxelloise.

D'autre part, il a été constaté officiellement que les attaques des aviateurs ennemis contre les hangars et champs d'aviation allemands des environs ont été déterminés, facilités et favorisés par les indications de certains habitants de l'agglomération bruxelloise.

Ainsi que je l'avais fait prévoir, la promesse donnée jadis de ne pas loger des troupes allemandes dans les habitations particulières est donc annulée. Pour autant que les mesures militaires le permettront, les soldats seront tout d'abord

imposed on the city.* The Governor-General had levied on the Belgian population a new contribution of war of 40,000,000 francs per month, and there had been the usual number of persons

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logés dans les maisons appartenant à des Belges ayant quitté le pays ou à des nationaux des États en guerre avec l'Allemagne.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,
BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

BRUXELLES, le 12 *novembre* 1915.

Translation

NOTICE

Referring to my notice of October 16 last, I bring to the knowledge of the public that arms and munitions have again been found, since October 25, in various quarters of Greater Brussels.

On the other hand, it has been officially stated that the attacks of enemy aviators on the hangars and German aviation fields in the vicinity have been guided, facilitated, and aided by signals from certain of the inhabitants of Greater Brussels.

As I had given warning, the promise given before not to lodge German troops in private homes is therefore annulled. As far as military exigencies will permit the soldiers will be lodged first in houses belonging to Belgians who have left the country or with citizens of States at war with Germany.

The Governor-General in Belgium,
BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

BRUSSELS, *November* 12, 1915.

CONTRIBUTION DE GUERRE

Ordre du Gouverneur général en Belgique, en date du 10 novembre 1915, contresigné par le Commandant supérieur de la IV^e^ armée, duc Albert de Wurtemberg.

Conformément à l'article 49 de la Convention de La Haye concernant la réglementation des lois et usages de la guerre sur terre, il est imposé à la population belge une contribution de guerre de 40 millions de francs par mois, payable jusqu'à nouvel ordre comme quote-part aux frais d'entretien de l'armée et aux frais d'administration du territoire occupé.

L'administration allemande a le droit d'exiger que les mensualités soient payées, en tout ou en partie, en argent allemand, calculé au change de 80 mark pour 100 francs.

Le paiement de la contribution est à charge des neuf provinces belges, qui en sont responsables comme débitrices solidaires.

La première mensualité devra se payer le 10 décembre 1915 au plus tard, les mensualités suivantes, au plus tard, le 10 de chaque mois à la caisse de l'armée de campagne (*Feldkriegskasse*) du Gouvernement général impérial à Bruxelles.

Si les provinces, pour se procurer les fonds nécessaires, doivent émettre des obligations, la forme et la teneur en seront déterminées par le Commissaire général impérial des banques en Belgique.

Translation

CONTRIBUTION OF WAR

Order of the Governor-General in Belgium, dated November 10, 1915, countersigned by the superior commandant of the Fourth Army, Duke Albert of Würtemberg.

In conformity with Article 49 of the Convention of The Hague concerning the regulation of the laws and customs of land warfare, there is imposed on

shot or imprisoned at hard labour for "treason in time of war."

And there had been another tragedy—a sequel, it was said, to the Cavell case. There was a young Belgian, the son of a retired officer in the Belgian army; he bore an honoured Belgian name, of which he had proved himself so unworthy as to sell himself as a spy to the Germans. It was he, so people said, who had betrayed Miss Cavell. One morning his body was found lying in the street, a bullet in the heart. Over the deed there hung the mystery of a profound and impenetrable silence. The Germans were piqued because the assassins were not at once discovered, and there were threats of fining the city 500,000 marks if justice was not immediately done. But no Belgian could be found, it seemed, who knew anything about the affair, and no one, in speaking of it, seemed to evince the horror and regret that such a deed should excite, though there was, in the gossip of the town, a universal sympathy for the old officer, the father of the recreant youth who had brought such shame upon his house.

But where death was so common such things were soon forgotten, and I had not been back in town two days before we had word from the German authorities that they proposed to seize certain food, and a message from London threatening the cessation of the *ravitaillement* altogether. Thus the situation seemed to be normal, the atmosphere familiar, and things in Belgium going on precisely as they had done before.

When Villalobar and I had an interview with the Baron von der Lancken the threat of seizure of food proved not to be so serious as the use of the word implied; what the Governor-General intended was to seize food that had been obtained

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the Belgian population a contribution of war of 40 million francs per month, payable until further notice, as their share of the expense of the upkeep of the army and of the administration of the occupied territory.

The German Administration has the right to demand that these monthly payments, in whole or in part, be made in German money, calculated at the rate of 80 marks for 100 francs.

The payment of the contribution is imposed on the nine Belgian provinces, which are responsible for it as a single debtor.

The first monthly payment must be made on December 10, 1915, at the latest, the following payments, at the latest, on the 10th of each month, to the treasurer of the occupying army of the Imperial General Government at Brussels.

If the provinces, in order to obtain the necessary funds, must issue obligations, their form and tenor will be determined by the Imperial Commissioner-General of Banks in Belgium.

fraudulently or in contravention of his orders, and to solve that problem we had only to suggest that the unfortunate word *saisir* be replaced by a term less likely to be misconstrued in the Press of other lands.

The summons from London, however, was more serious. The *ravitaillement* of Belgium had not always had the unanimous approval of Germany's enemies: there remained in certain formalistic minds the old preoccupation of The Hague Conventions, according to which it was the duty of the occupying Power to assure the feeding of the population; and there were still those who did not hesitate to say that a hungry population in Belgium would render Germany more odious and increase her military difficulties. There were, too, never quieted suspicions of the Germans; it was constantly being alleged that they seized the food and fed it to their soldiers. And when all these objections were answered, or in some way overcome, the claim was made that even if the Germans did not seize the food-stuffs imported by the C.R.B., they derived an indirect benefit by their own use of indigenous products of Belgian soil. It was to meet this objection that we had secured, in the previous summer, the guarantees that the Belgian crops would be reserved for Belgian consumption. And now another charge was made against the Germans—namely, that they profited by the seizure of Belgian cattle.

There was much, indeed, in the claim. Day after day along the avenues of Brussels herds of kine went lowing to the slaughter, and some were diverted to German uses. I used to stand looking out of my window in the Rue Belliard watching the herds driven by on their way to the *abattoir*, bellowing in I know not what presentiment of their tragic fate, a sickening spectacle of the incorrigible cruelty that is so implicit a part of life, one kind devouring the other—that ceaseless and remorseless warfare between the species on this planet by which German philosophers, themselves not yet having attained that development in which the imagination could at least conceive of a better order, could justify in profound scientific theses the German intention to devour Belgians, Frenchmen, Russians, and, above all, Englishmen, and, in the end, when the visible supply of these gave out, Americans as well.

Many a German had explained this law to me, some of them

Doctors of Philosophy, who ought to know everything, showing how every great nation was the result of countless contests between small States and peoples that ultimately, under this power, became great States and nations. Lombardy and Tuscany and Venice and Naples had been made into Italy; Normandy and Brittany and Picardy into France; England had absorbed Scotland and Wales and Ireland; Prussia had overcome Bavaria and Austria; even America had united a number of smaller States to make a nation, and, as they invariably liked to predict in their persistent, cynical misunderstanding of us, was about to seize others. And now that the peoples of the world had been thus far united, the process of agglutination must go on: Spain and France and England had had their day; it was Germany's turn. There was not in their minds anywhere, it appeared, a solitary ray that could reveal by its light any higher motives, any higher ideal, any higher law.

"And the process must go on?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Then what will become of Germany in the end?"

I can see the gilt epaulettes move in the shrug of the officer's shoulders.

"Some day," he said, "another people will devour us, perhaps the Russians, perhaps the Chinese, perhaps the Japanese—*qu'est-ce que je sais, moi!*"

He shrugged his shoulders again and sighed. Then, with a sudden air of relief, as though he would be well out of it all by that time, he added:

"But that will not be for a hundred years. . . ."

Whether on this principle or on some other, the seizures of cattle were going on in the provinces. We had made an observation about it, Villalobar and I, some time before, and had been flatly told that it was none of our business. Officially, to be sure, it was not; there were no guarantees that covered the cattle in the Belgian fields. But the English felt that the seizure of the cattle was a violation of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the guarantees, and so they had sent word to say that if the seizures were not stopped the *ravitaillement* would be. Villalobar and I went to see Baron von der Lancken and broached the subject; we found him disposed to arrange the matter. We had numerous conferences. The German authorities had the

feeling that the British Government would put an end to the *ravitaillement* if in so doing they could throw the blame on them; the Germans were not disposed to accept any such terrible responsibility, and yet they could not appear to have receded in the face of British threats. The affair was one of exquisite delicacy, and it is only to show how complicated and difficult it all was, then and always, that I mention the fact that while the *pourparlers* were going on, a telegram came from Mr. Hoover in London saying that if the assurances were not given at once and without further discussion the *ravitaillement* would cease. We could reply that the problem was in a fair way of solution, and ask for patience; it was a hard task to make Germans do what they did not wish to do, and to do it immediately, as other than we had already learned.

It was in the midst of these negotiations that the Governor-General invited me to lunch with him at Trois-Fontaines, and one bleak day toward the end of January Von der Lancken and I drove out there. General von Bissing had with him only the young officers of his staff, and we sat down to a simple luncheon in the dining-room that looked out into the park. The old Prussian soldier had just returned from shooting deer in the Ardennes, and, proud of the antlers he had just hung as trophies in the great hall of the château, was very affable that day. He seemed hale and hearty under his seventy-two years, and there was a good deal of laughter at luncheon. We were all speaking French, which, as I had been slowly discovering, he spoke fairly well, though at our first interview with him, more than a year before, he had had Von der Lancken translate his German into French.

Remarking to me that day on the difficulties of his position, he said that he was expected to unite the subtlety of a diplomatist with the firmness of a soldier: if he did anything that the Belgians approved, which was seldom, he was blamed at Berlin; if he did anything that pleased Berlin, he was execrated by the Belgians. It was a difficult position to occupy, no doubt, as the position of any satrap should be in our times. He said it was his desire to ameliorate conditions in Belgium, and was very enthusiastic over schemes of conserving waste. For instance, he had just established a reduction plant for dead animals. Months before, late in October, he had issued a decree, which was not posted

on the walls, concerning the utilization of " cadavers of animals " (*concernant l'utilisation des cadavres d'animaux*), in which, with many details, he had directed that the dead bodies of animals not fit for consumption as food be preserved and, by declaration at the local Kommandantur, held at the disposal of the Oil Central (*Oelzentrale*) to be reduced to grease.* He was delighted

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CADAVRES D'ANIMAUX.

Arrêté du Gouverneur général en Belgique en date du 29 octobre 1915, concernant l'utilisation des cadavres d'animaux et des animaux abattus et impropres à la consommation humaine :

Article 1er.—Lorsqu'un solipède (cheval, âne, mulet, bardot), une bête bovine, un veau, un porc (à l'exception des cochons de lait) vient à périr ou est abattu pour cause d'épizootie, la déclaration doit en être faite dans les douze heures à la " Kommandantur " compétente pour la localité.

La même déclaration doit être faite en ce qui concerne les corps entiers d'animaux abattus dans les abattoirs publics, si ces corps ou ces parties ont été jugés impropres à la consommation humaine. Ces parties d'animaux doivent être conservées dans les récipients clos, fermés à clef ; en outre on devra verser un désinfectant sur les parties, afin qu'elles ne se putréfient pas.

Les cadavres, les corps d'animaux et leurs parties doivent être remis aux établissements d'utilisation des cadavres que le Bureau central des huiles (Oelzentrale) fera connaître. Les moutons et les chèvres peuvent être également livrés à ces établissements.

Art. 2.—Sont tenus de faire la déclaration : (1) le propriétaire ; (2) les experts vétérinaires et autres personnes chargées du contrôle de la viande de boucherie ; (3) les directeurs des abattoirs ou les personnes sous la surveillance desquelles se trouvent le cadavre, le corps d'animal ou ses parties (art. 1er, premier et deuxième alinéas) ; (4) s'il s'agit de cadavres ou de corps d'animaux atteints d'épizootie, le vétérinaire appelé à constater la maladie.

La déclaration effectuée par l'une de ces personnes dispense les autres de l'obligation de déclarer.

Art. 3.—L'enlèvement des cadavres, des corps d'animaux et de leurs parties (art. 1er) se fait gratuitement par les établissements d'utilisation des cadavres : en été dans les vingt-quatre heures et en hiver dans les trent-six heures de l'avis donné à cette fin par l'autorité compétente. Le transport aux établissements d'utilisation des parties d'animaux conservées en dépôt dans les abattoirs publics se fera dès qu'il y aura une quantité suffisante à transporter.

Art. 4.—Le propriétaire n'a pas droit à une indemnité pour les parties d'animaux abattus ni pour les cadavres ou les corps d'animaux (art. 1er) qui sont écorchés. Si le cadavre ou le corps d'un animal est livré avec la peau, une indemnité convenable doit être accordée pour la peau, à condition que, d'après les dispositions de police vétérinaire en vigueur, il soit permis de l'enlever du corps de l'animal.

Le maximum des indemnités est fixé ainsi qu'il suit :

Pour les peaux de chevaux de 17 kilos et plus, 18 mark pièce ;
Pour les peaux de moutons, 2 mark pièce ;
Pour les peaux de chèvres, 2 mark pièce ;
Pour les peaux des bêtes bovines, 80 pfennigs le kilo ;
Pour les peaux de veaux, M. 1.20 le kilo.

Il n'est pas accordé d'indemnité pour les peaux de porcs. Pour toute peau de cheval qui pèsera moins de 17 kilos, on fera une déduction proportionelle au manque de poids.

Art. 5.—Les infractions aux articles 1er, 2 et 3 du présent arrêté seront punies

with his scheme and spoke of it as a reform likely to result in benefit to the human race, and, though I never talked with him about it afterward, it must have been another disillusionment to him, and one more cause for feeling that his efforts were unappreciated, when he heard the story that was going the rounds of the Press a few months later to the effect that he was utilizing the bodies of dead soldiers to obtain grease to manufacture powder. I suppose it was the use of the word *cadavre*, which has such a grizzly sound in the Western ear, that gave rise to the gruesome suggestion.

The Governor-General's talk, however, was all of physical or

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d'une amende pouvant aller jusqu'à 5000 mark et d'une peine d'emprisonnement d'un an au plus ou d'une de ces deux peines à l'exclusion de l'autre.

Les infractions sont de la compétence des tribunaux militaires et des autorités militaires.

DISPOSITIONS COMPLÉMENTAIRES

En vue de faciliter l'application de l'article 1er de l'arrêté ci-dessus, sont considérés, jusqu'à nouvel ordre, comme établissements d'utilisation des cadavres d'animaux, les chantiers d'équarrissage de Schooten près d'Anvers, Deurne-lez-Diest, Jette-St.-Pierre près Bruxelles, Blaton (province de Hainaut), Châtelet près Charleroi, Libramont (province de Luxembourg), Andenne (province de Namur), Pont-Atlant près Maubeuge, Sluste près Tongres (mise en exploitation fin novembre 1915).

Les cadavres, corps et parties d'animaux impropres à la consommation humaine et mentionnés à l'article 1er de l'arrêté précité, doivent être délivrés à l'établissement d'utilisation compétent pour le district où ils se trouvent; les limites des divers districts sont indiquées sur le croquis intercalé dans le texte allemand. S'il y a lieu, il sera désigné d'autres districts.

Translation

BODIES OF ANIMALS

Order of the Governor-General in Belgium dated October 25, 1915, concerning the utilization of the bodies of animals, and of animals killed and unfit for human consumption:

Article 1.—As soon as a solid-hoofed animal (horse, ass, mule, pack-mule), a bovine beast, lamb, hog (with the exception of sucking-pigs), dies or is killed for epizootic reasons, the declaration must be made within twelve hours to the Kommandantur of that locality.

The same declaration must be made concerning the entire body of animals killed in the public slaughter-houses, if its body, or parts of it, have been judged unfit for human consumption. These parts of the animal are to be saved in a closed receptacle and locked; also, a disinfectant is to be poured over the parts so that they will not putrefy.

The bodies, the carcases of animals, and their parts are to be turned over to the establishments for the utilization of bodies which the Central Oil Bureau (Oelzentrale) will designate. Sheep and goats may be similarly turned over to these establishments.

Art. 2.—The declaration is to be made by: (1) the proprietor; (2) the veterinary experts and other persons charged with the control of butchers' meat; (3) the directors of the slaughter-houses, or the persons who have charge of the bodies of animals and their parts (Art. 1, first and second paragraphs);

administrative, and never of political organization; he spoke as though he could show the Belgians many an improvement in that line that would astonish them if only they were not so stiff-necked and so violent in their prejudice against any suggestions emanating from him. He talked with enthusiasm of his many projects of organization, his Zentralen, and all that; he had some notions about agriculture, and had there been no war in the world and no invasion, had he been in some executive position with a right and warrant that one could reconcile with justice, one would have found him a rather good-natured old man, something of a personality in his way, who worked hard,

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(4) if it concerns the bodies or carcases of animals tainted epizootically, the veterinary called to determine the disease.

The declaration of one of these persons absolves the others.

Art. 3.—The removal of the bodies, of the carcases of animals and their parts (Art. 1) is provided for free of charge by the establishments for the utilization of bodies, in the summer within twenty-four hours and in the winter within thirty-six hours after notice given to that end by a competent authority. The parts of animals saved in the public slaughter-houses will be transported to the utilization establishments whenever there is a sufficient quantity.

Art. 4.—The proprietor has no right to an indemnity for the parts of animals killed, nor for the bodies or carcases of animals that are skinned. If the body or the carcase of an animal is given with the skin, a reasonable indemnity will be allowed for the skin on condition that, after the approval of the veterinary in power, he be allowed to remove it from the body of the animal.

The maximum indemnities are fixed as follows:

For the skins of horses, 17 kilograms or more, 18 marks apiece.
For the skins of sheep, 2 marks apiece.
For the skins of goats, 2 marks apiece.
For the skins of cattle, 80 pfennigs per kilogram.
For the skins of lambs, M 1.20 per kilogram.

No indemnity is allowed for the skins of hogs. For each horse-skin weighing less than 17 kilograms a reduction will be made in proportion to the weight.

Art. 5.—Infringements of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the present order will be punished by a fine not to exceed 5000 marks and by imprisonment for not more than one year, or by one of these two penalties to the exclusion of the other.

Infringements are within the jurisdiction of the military tribunals and the military authorities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In order to facilitate the application of Article 1 of the order herein, the slaughtering-yards of Schooten near Antwerp, Deurne-lez-Diest, Jette-St.-Pierre near Brussels, Blaton (Province of Hainaut), Châtelet near Charleroi, Libramont (Province of Luxembourg), Andenne (Province of Namur), Pont-Atlant near Maubeuge, Sluste near Tongres (put into operation at the end of November 1915) are designated, until further orders, as establishments for the utilization of the cadavers of animals.

The bodies, carcases, and parts of animals unfit for human consumption and named in Article 1 of the preceding order, are to be delivered to the utilization establishment indicated for the district where they are found; the limits of the several districts are indicated on the sketch attached to the German text. If it is necessary, other districts will be designated.

studied laboriously, and took his duties seriously, and liked to think of himself as doing justice. The vast and essential difference between our points of view, the utter antithesis of his conception of the bases of authority and my own, were not apparent to him; neither he nor any of the younger officers at his board that winter day had the least doubt as to his right to be where he was, or the slightest embarrassment in their position as invaders and interlopers. They thought his right to govern Belgium as incontestable as I should consider the right of the Governor of Ohio to administer the affairs under the Constitution. He regarded the Belgians precisely as the head master of a reform school might regard the incorrigible youth committed to his charge; he was willing to help them and to tell them how to be good, but he must be rigid in discipline and never let them once out of hand. My impression of him in the end was that, bound within constitutional limitations, he would have made a capable, rigidly firm, though not a brilliant, executive. As mayor, for instance, he would have policed the town remorselessly, kept the streets clean, tolerated no waste of the taxpayer's money, built no public improvements except those that were strictly necessary and utilitarian—and would never have been re-elected. As an untrammelled dictator he lacked the imagination that could even understand the mentality of the people he was called upon to rule, much less mitigate the hatred and detestation in which they held him.

Our talk was mostly casual, of course, and sounded no depths. There were too many topics upon which it seemed unsafe to venture if the luncheon were to pass off pleasantly. The General, in his husky old dragoon voice, was fully competent to talk about the war—a field in which I was not qualified. He told me, with the satisfaction a man always feels in winning a wager, that one of his officers long before had offered to bet him a dinner that peace would come before Christmas 1915; he had taken the bet and won. The relations between our two countries did not just then form a subject of conversation which, as the Germans say, would be *gemütlich*, and I did not like to speak of the *ravitaillement* because that would have seemed like talking shop, and I had heard from one of his entourage that he did not like that: there was a certain young diplomat, said my informant, who used to play bridge with the old Governor and torment

him all evening with requests for *laissez-passers* and other personal favours for himself and his friends. I had the subject of the *ravitaillement* on my mind, however; whether or not he had some prescience of that I do not know—he was not what one would call occult—but at any rate, suddenly, laughing at some story or other which I had been telling him, he turned, lifted his glass of red wine to his blue lips, paused, and said abruptly:

"Cette petite difficulté dans le ravitaillement—ça s'arrangera."

I thanked him, and in my gratitude for the relief this sudden assurance gave me, racked my brain for another funny story to tell him. Like most old men weighed down with executive cares he did not often have a chance to laugh, and the young, in their egoism and selfishness, are always forgetting that the old like to laugh too, and are grateful for any pains taken to that end—even gruff old German generals.

It was a good luncheon in the German cuisine, and stark in its simplicity. The Governor-General lived a frugal and a regular life and there was no waste on his table or in his household.

I was glad that my poor Belgians, too, were to continue to eat their own frugal repasts, and glad that I could go back to Brussels and tell Villalobar and the others that our latest troubles were in a way to be conjured.

IX. STRIPPING BELGIUM

OUR discussions for a time, however, were interrupted because the King of Bavaria had come to town, and all the Excellencies in the German Government must be on hand to do him homage and to assist at the festivities given in the various Ministries in his honour. The King was incognito, at least so far as the Belgians were concerned, for none of them ever saw him, or cared to, perhaps. We were always hearing of some great German personage in town, but we never saw him, though on this occasion one of the King's entourage, some Royal Highness or other, a prince

> with a name of his own,
> And a certain use in the world, no doubt,

called on Villalobar and told him that they were all sick of the war;

My own callers just at that time were Belgian personalities who happened to have English nurses or governesses in their families, and they were all excited and concerned by the latest rumour that had gone through the town—namely, that all English women were to leave at once. Inasmuch as this rumour touched that most acute of all sensitive spots in the social organism, to wit, the servant problem, the Quartier Léopold was almost in revolution. For a long time we had been sending to Holland by special trains, and under the escort of a representative of the Legation, such Englishwomen as desired to leave Belgium. Not all of them cared to go, for many who had good homes and good employment in Brussels had no homes in England. Then during my absence an Englishwoman had gone to the Legation and asked Gibson, who was in charge, whether she should go to England or not. Like many others, she did not like to solve her problems herself and insisted on some one else's taking the responsibility, and in the end asked Gibson to write to London and ask for advice. He did so, and the reply, naturally, was that all Englishwomen who could do so should leave Brussels. The woman thereupon spread the alarm, and all the Englishwomen decided to go. The news not only alarmed the Quartier Léopold, but it reached the Germans and alarmed them; they saw menaces of attacks, offensives, bombardments, and I know not what else of the dreadful in a military way, and refused to allow any more trains to depart. This only increased the panic. From the first we had observed an interesting psychological phenomenon: most women were anxious to leave until we procured their passports and trains; then most of them decided not to go, having lost the desire to depart as soon as they were sure they could do so. When it was understood that there were to be no more trains they were unanimous in their decision to leave, and we had a trying time for weeks. It was more than weeks, it was months before we could get permission for any of them to go; even then it was only in isolated cases.

One evening very late the bell rang, and there came into the hall a little Englishwoman, lugging an enormous valise and dragging two very sleepy children after her. She had come that day from Lille, where her husband had been a teacher until the Germans sent him to Ruhleben with other Englishmen, leaving her alone in the strange city. Finally the Kommandantur at

Lille gave her a *laissez-passer* to go to England, and, happy in the thought of seeing her home once more, she had started out, and, arriving at Brussels that night, had been told that her *laissez-passer* would not be honoured. We provided for her and for the sleepy children, poor little things; but, try as I would, I could never succeed in obtaining permission for that woman to leave. We did all we could for her, and the pretty children in new clothes went bravely to school and were soon speaking French; while for the mother, a quiet and competent little woman, we procured some pupils to whom she gave lessons in English. Nearly every Belgian who could not already do so was learning to speak English in those days, and the basic resemblance of the Flemish to our own language made it rather easy for them.

Such little dramas, oftentimes with more tragic *dénouements*, were of daily occurrence in our lives; and yet there were romances too. The whole story of the C.R.B. is, in its way, a romance, and, as I have said, I often used to wish that Frank Norris had lived to write it as the third of his unfinished trilogy of the wheat. The young men—the Rhodes scholars and the other University men who came after the Rhodes scholars when these went back to Oxford, all reflected great credit on America and on the American universities, and Mr. Hoover wrought them into an organization that had all the esprit de corps of a crack regiment of Guards. They were received enthusiastically by every one, and the delegates were very popular among the Belgians, who did all they could to lighten the task the delegates had voluntarily assumed.

Mr. Carstairs, for instance, the delegate down in the Hainaut, lived in the great château at Mariemont as the guest of Raoul Warocqué, the last of a line of men noted for their public spirit. They had been burgomasters for generations, and Warocqué was the representative of the Comité National in his region. Mr. Carstairs had won the hand of Mademoiselle Hélène Guinotte, one of those two charming and beautiful sisters whom I had met in the *salons* of the Baroness Lambert before the war, and one day in January a great company of us went down to Mariemont for the wedding. There was a dinner in the old château, attended by the family and by a few members of the C.R.B.; the ironic fates were at the dinner too, as a matter of course, for the master of the house sat there, the last of his race with no heirs, amidst

the guests he was so touchingly happy to have about him in honour of an alliance between Belgium and America—dying before our eyes. The wedding was solemnized the next morning, first in the town hall, where the civil ceremony was conducted by the Burgomaster *faisant fonction.* He was an old peasant in his Sunday blacks and white cravat, with the black, yellow, and red sash about his middle, and he drew out a pair of steel bowed spectacles and read a little address in which he referred most movingly to what America had done for his country. He read it with the dignity with which an honest, simple, unaffected good man invests any ceremony in which he takes part. And then we all drove to the little church in the village, where the priest—a tall, gaunt, awkward young Walloon—celebrated the Mass and pronounced the religious ceremony, his Latin in the Walloon accent sounding strange in our ears. There was the wedding-breakfast at The Pashy, the country home of the Guinottes, and then the bride and groom drove away for their honeymoon in Holland—their *Passierscheins* all in order.

We could almost forget the war in scenes so normal, until back at Brussels that evening Mr. Poland, the Director of the C.R.B., came to report that he had just had a telegram from Mr. Hoover saying that the British Government had received word from its agents to the effect that the Belgian Committee at Antwerp had sold eighteen hundred tons of rice to the Germans! The further importation of rice had been forbidden—and, in short, we had another incident to deal with. The event proved that the agents were mistaken; the Committee at Antwerp had sold no rice, of course, though some of the peasants about Antwerp had either sold or traded their little rations of rice. The Belgians had never eaten rice, and did not like it when the Americans introduced it to them; and I could not blame them much, for I do not like rice myself, even when French *chefs* disguise it with all their cunning art. They did not like corn-meal either—*maïs* they called it—and considered it fit only for cattle to eat; but that was because, unlike some dusky Kentucky cooks of my acquaintance, they did not know how to transform it into corn pone or johnny-cake or spoon-bread. The amount of rice they had disposed of was insignificant, and the incident proved not to be serious, after all.

But there were new difficulties in securing from the Germans

the promise not to requisition any more cattle. The old and never-conquered problem of the *chômeurs* had arisen again; it would not down. The Germans wished to attach a condition to the guarantees to the effect that the *chômeurs* be compelled to work, which meant they must work for the Germans, or else cease to receive their allotments from the Comité National. Von Sauberzweig was reported to have said that the diplomats had no right to be in Belgium, and that they should be sent away. The difficulties came, like most difficulties in the world as it was then and as it is now organized, from *Messieurs les militaires*, but they did not wholly have their way just then, for at the end of January Baron von der Lancken authorized us to say that the Governor-General had decided to give the guarantees, and that no more requisitions of cattle would be made.

However, if the Germans were willing to forgo their seizures of cattle, they were just beginning to requisition all the *noyers* in Belgium—those stately walnut-trees, the pride of many an estate, and, in those cases in which they belonged to peasants, the support of whole families. There was nothing that we could do to prevent that, because the Germans wished to make stocks for their rifles, and as this was purely a military use it was no affair of neutral diplomats. Governor-General von Bissing, so the story ran, had been opposed to cutting down the trees, and on a recent visit to Berlin had been reproached by the military authorities with the fact, and in the discussion that ensued had been outdone by *Messieurs les militaires*, as every one is in Germany, and had been forced to yield. And so the beautiful tall trees, many of them centuries old, were cut down, and not one ultimately was spared—not even those on the estate of the Prince de Ligne at Bel-Œil, nor those of the Prince Napoleon.

The Germans were seizing other things, too—the rails of the vicinal tramways, the metal in houses, rubber, wool, everything that could aid or comfort an army while it went about its systematic and scientific destruction of all that which centuries had been required to build or produce. Even the machinery in the factories was being shipped off to Germany, and Belgium faced a future in which she would find herself stripped naked of all she had.

X. THE FATE OF LOUIS BRILL

LIFE in Brussels became a little more difficult and a little more drear each day. Misery crept everywhere. Potatoes, under the Kartoffelzentrale, were more and more scarce; there were incipient riots in the commune of Molenbeek-St.-Jean, women fiercely assailing the *maison communale* until the police and even the *pompiers* had to be called to disperse them. And misery reacting on character in the way it has, added to the cruelty and insensibility in which life so abounds. The herders of the cattle lowing down the Rue Belliard would carelessly beat them over the muzzles with their clubs, and the beasts would close their eyes and toss their heads away to escape the pain of those blows. I was walking one day at noon in the Vieux Marché in the Place de Jeu-de-Balle, where all the rubbish of the town, the unclean and disgusting debris of broken and unsuccessful lives, was assorted and exposed for sale; the clatter of the wooden shoes on the cobble-stones had been stilled by the noon hour, and the market-women in their flimsy booths were drinking their coffee from great bowls and gossiping. And I saw a little girl crying bitterly as she watched her portly mother, indifferent to the child's appeals, slowly munch the *tartine* she would not share; the child watched it disappear bite by bite down the selfish maternal throat, and at last, when there was but one bite left, the mother gave her that.

Mr. Casper Whitney, of the C.R.B., had just returned with Mr. Walcott from a visit to Poland with sickening stories of the suffering there, and in Serbia, ravaged by the Bulgarians; black misery, famine, pestilence everywhere, all the symptoms of martial glory and world-empire. And that was a situation which the C.R.B. could not help, much as it tried to do so; there were too many military or political difficulties in the way. And Germany, Mr. Walcott said, was preparing to begin a vast offensive in the West—three million bayonets already on the line, and the German General Staff, as a German officer had confided to him, prepared to sacrifice five hundred thousand of them. It sounded mathematically and scientifically military as long as one spoke of them as bayonets; it sounded less so when one abandoned that professional euphe-

mism and spoke of soldiers, and if one resorted to human terms and spoke of them as men—one would be growing soft and sentimental.

The dark influences of the times lay heavily on all spirits in a universal depression from which there was no escape. There were not only such little scenes as those I have noted to illustrate the pain and tragedy of life. Now and then a spring day, straying too far in advance of the slowly advancing march of spring itself, would find itself the prisoner of February, and on the morning of such a day—the sunlight streaming, the ground damp from the constant rain, its drops glistening on the trees—the Belgian wounded prisoners brought in from the front were allowed to promenade in the park of the Palais des Académies, the great classical structure where the Belgian Academies of Letters and Beaux-Arts, of Sciences and of Medicine, have their seat—turned now by the Germans into a military hospital. The invalids wore the long gaberdines of striped ticking that make the wounded in German hospitals look like zanies, but they had on their jaunty *bonnets de police*, with the tassels of yellow or of red or of blue, and they hobbled up and down on their crutches and smoked and laughed—glad, no doubt, of the respite that *la bonne blessure* gave them, and happy even in this strange home-coming.

"*Les bons diables!*" cried one man in the throng that pressed up to the high iron fence around the yard to stare at them. The Belgian soldiers were not allowed to approach the grille, and no one was permitted to speak to them, but men and women and children went up to the high grille and peered between the iron bars, German sentinels glowering ill-humouredly at them. Those in the crowd were very serious; they were trying to recognize among the prisoners some loved one. I saw a woman turn away from the crowd in anguish, her face drawn with the pain of a great grief and stained by tears. It had been less than two years since from that very spot I had seen those same boys, no doubt, and thousands of others like them, parading down the boulevard, hale, hearty, happy, with flags and trumpets and drums, celebrating the fête of their King.

The wounded were being brought in increasing numbers to Brussels; our courier had not been allowed to go out for days, and the frontier was closed. Mitilineu's brother, who was a

diplomat at The Hague, had come to Brussels with his wife to visit the Rumanian Legation, and was no sooner arrived and retired for the night than he was routed out by a German officer and told that he and his wife must depart by train in the morning—which they did, and at seven o'clock were away in a coach of which the blinds were drawn.

The town was pulsating with the news of the heavy movement of troops, and suddenly hope was high once more, since another great offensive had begun. The only way Brussels could get news was by deduction—a process that was oftentimes exaggerated in its results. I noted in my journal at the end of a trying day at about that time the rumours that I had heard that afternoon alone: America had broken off diplomatic relations with Germany; the American Legation was packing up and about to leave; there had been a revolt of troops at Ghent and the Military Governor there had been assassinated; there had been a naval battle in the North Sea and twenty German men-o'-war had been sunk; the Crown Prince of Turkey had not committed suicide, but had been put to death because he was pro-Ally; Tino, the King of Greece, had abdicated; there was a revolution in Bulgaria; all Englishwomen in Belgium were to be interned in a camp near Antwerp; a diplomat had arrived from Berlin with positive but confidential information that the Germans were to make one last desperate effort to reach Calais, and failing that would retire to the Meuse.

These rumours served as topics for conversation at dinner when one had exhausted the subject of potatoes—as food for discussion merely; and it was a phenomenon attested or confessed by everybody, now that potatoes were no more to be had, that they had suddenly grown delicious; there was one displayed in the window of an antiquarian in the Rue d'Assaut labelled:

"AUTHENTIQUE—VENDUE"

I was constantly appealed to as a diplomat—and therefore as an informed, or at least as an informing, person—to say whether such reports as these were true or not. I knew no more about most of them than any one else, and, as a conscientious realist, never believed any news but bad news. Poor Brussels never had any good news, which was doubtless the reason—since necessity, as the copy-book says, is the mother of invention—that

it was invented now and then. Herbert Spencer might have explained the phenomenon. But to us the rumours did serve as topics for conversation, as I said, for the dinner-table was growing dull—and it was not in good taste to deny them. One no longer heard the sprightly talk about the war, the speculation as to its duration, the discussion of world-politics, and the probable changes that were to be produced in the surface of the habitable globe, as one heard it when all was thrilling excitement and emotion in those first days of the honeymoon of the war. The war had taken on its true colours as a hideous, an ugly, and a squalid thing, as all abundantly recognized. Even in the piping times of peace those who talk of ideals are few, very few indeed, and those who discuss ideas not much more numerous. Most people talk of other people; and though there are, perhaps, other people who are more interesting than ideas or ideals, that is not the reason why people talk of them. But most subjects seemed to have been exhausted in Brussels, save perhaps that of *la mentalité allemande*, and the principle of that had been grasped rather generally. We could be aroused from our after-dinner gloom only by being plunged into the deeper gloom of some new and concrete horror or injustice.

No one made an effort; the people one met seemed to have aged and grown careless and seedy and not good-looking any more. The women, poor things, never had any new gowns and were all in black. I can recall an evening in February—the 10th, my journal says—when, after a dinner at a house where once there had been only gaiety and light and sprightly talk, I was sitting and smoking a last cigarette and waiting for the old butler to come in and announce my motor. He came at last, but instead of the formula there was a whispered consultation with the master of the house, who beckoned to me, and we left the room and went to the dim *salon*, where a man was waiting for me; he had a white, drawn face—another had been condemned, was to be shot that night; could I do anything?

The name of the condemned man, Louis Brill, suggested nothing to me other than one more vague form among that host of wraiths whom German firing-squads had hurried into the darkness and the silence, but in the first of the confused explanations the name of Edith Cavell was mentioned. Then I had the story.

Louis Brill was a waiter in a restaurant in Brussels, and he had been tried and condemned to death that very day for having shot down that recreant son of the retired army officer, who was said to have betrayed Miss Cavell. The swarming spies and the secret agents, with inexorable patience, had prowled the mysterious underworld of Brussels until they had found the man who shot the traitor down in the street, and now he too was to die. I cannot pretend to know the whole story; it will be told some day, I suppose, with many another like it, when the history of those dark times is all revealed. Perhaps it was but an element of the romanticism in which, since war itself is so wholly an expression of romanticism, all stories of war must be invested, that linked the dark event to the immortal name of the English nurse. There were those who said that Brill did not shoot him to avenge Miss Cavell, but to avenge those of his comrades whom the recreant Belgian had offered to guide when they wished to leave the country, and, luring them thus to the Holland border, had there miserably betrayed them to the Germans. He may in this way have learned of the group with which Miss Cavell was associated—I do not know; but it was for his treachery in one or the other instance that Brill dogged him, patiently, remorselessly, tracking him down until the night when, as he stepped from his own door into the street, Brill shot him down and left his body lying there on the sidewalk.

From that hour Brill, having been the hunter, became the hunted, and for weeks eluded German spies and German *Polizei*, until he too was at last tracked down and captured.

The man who came to me that night wished to know how to present the *recours en grâce* that Brill's mother had signed, and I could tell him to whom to present it, at any rate. It had no effect, of course, and Brill was shot the next morning, as we were informed by the usual *affiche*.*

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* This is the *affiche*:

AVIS

Par jugement du 8–9 février 1916, le tribunal de campagne a, indépendamment d'autres personnes condamnées à des peines diverses, condamné

LOUIS BRILL,
garçon de café à Bruxelles,
à la peine de mort

pour assassinat commis à l'aide d'une arme à feu.

Le jugement a été confirmé et exécuté.

BRUXELLES, *le* 11 *février* 1916. LE GOUVERNEMENT DE BRUXELLES.

XI. VERDUN

In principle the Germans had assented to the proposition that no more cattle were to be requisitioned in Belgium; but the details had not been agreed upon and the formal document had not been signed. We met then finally there in the yellow *salon* of the Ministry of Industry to reduce it all to writing—the Baron von der Lancken, Dr. Reith, Dr. Brohn of the Vermittlungstelle, the Marquis de Villalobar, M. van Vollenhoven, M. Francqui, and I. We met every afternoon for days, and agreed finally on the terms of a letter which the Governor-General was to address to the Protecting Ministers promising to forbid further requisitions of cattle. But there remained the difficult problem of the *chômeurs*: the Government of Occupation wished to attach the condition, so often proposed, that the lists of *chômeurs* be furnished by the Comité National. That question had been smouldering beneath all our discussions ever since the seizure by the Germans of the Belgian Red Cross, the funds of which the Germans had been distributing to the needy, mostly women, on condition that they work for them—sewing those sacks that, filled with earth, were used in the German trenches. We succeeded finally in securing the draft of a letter without conditions, and then, the second day, the Germans proposed a draft of a second letter which, to be sent with the letter containing the new guarantees, raised again and almost in the same form the whole question of the *chômeurs*. In our discussion of that day I pointed out that under any enlightened juridical system two letters in negotiations dealing with the same subject, written and signed and delivered at the same time, would be construed together, and that to approve the proposed letter would be to accept the very condition to which we were opposed; and when I appealed to Dr. Reith,

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Translation

NOTICE

By judgment of February 8 and 9, 1916, the military tribunal has, independently of other persons condemned to various punishments, condemned

LOUIS BRILL,
waiter in a restaurant in Brussels,
to the death penalty

for assassination committed with firearms.

The judgment has been confirmed and executed.

BRUSSELS, *February* 11, 1916. THE GOVERNMENT OF BRUSSELS.

himself a lawyer, reared in Antwerp and educated in Belgian schools, he agreed. We got over this difficulty then, and the second letter was not for the moment insisted upon, and at our third meeting the guarantee was agreed upon in its final form.

Then the Baron von der Lancken formally requested the Marquis to undertake a journey to London for the purpose of delivering the letter of guarantee; the Marquis bowed and consented, and asked that M. Francqui and the Baron Lambert be permitted to bear him company, and the Baron von der Lancken bowed and consented. And it was so ordered.

The plan to have the three gentlemen bear in person the letter of the Governor-General to London, instead of sending it by the courier as had always been done, had been under discussion for some time; Baron von der Lancken had mentioned it to me, as had others, and I was glad that they could have the relief of being for a while away from Belgium. Villalobar had not had a holiday, and he wished, among other things, to visit Madrid. And so, a few days later, they left Brussels.

That Friday, indeed, was a day of general exodus. Gibson had been granted leave and was going to London; Mr. Heineman was going home to America, and was taking Mr. Hulse with him; and the motor-cars of all our departing friends trailed out along the road to Antwerp and to Esschen, abandoning us to a dull day of dreary rain.

The Baron Lambert, however, was at the very last almost cheated of his journey. The evening before the *Polizei* made a sudden descent on his bank and began a perquisition in the grand style. It had been reported that he had a telephone-wire that enabled him to talk to Paris, and the thoroughgoing *Polizei* came to unearth it. What they found was only the telephone-booth, relic of old and happier days, which, with its private wire connecting the Baron's establishment with the Rothschild bank in Paris, was plainly marked on the outside with the name of that once gay city. Some Teutonic detective had seen the booth standing there in its place in the orderly row of telephone-booths and reading the word " Paris " on its door, had made the illuminating deduction, quite in the Sherlock Holmes manner, that the Baron had a secret wire to the French capital, and imagined daily confabulations and dark and mysterious conspirations.

The matter was reported to Baron von der Lancken, who quickly put an end to that nonsense, so that the Baron went with his *compagnons de voyage*, and the detective was left to the bitter reflections of unappreciated genius. And I, in the dreary rain, sauntered down to the Rue de l'Empereur for a chat with a little French antiquarian who collected, and I suppose sometimes sold, though never to me, relics of the Napoleonic wars—old busbies and shakos, the plumes of which had nodded in the reviews of the great Emperor, and postilions' jack-boots that had been spattered with the mud that splashed as he rode from glory to glory.

It was not these things, but the philosophic observations or the witticisms in the Parisian accent—with the r's well *grasseyés*—that I sought in him, though his philosophy was not so profound as that of another friend I had made in Ch. Desamblancx, an old bookbinder in the Rue Ducale, there where it twists down into the Rue de Louvain. Once the apprentice-boy in the long white smock had clattered in his wooden shoes across the pavement in answer to the jangling old bell and let me in, and shut the big door behind, he had shut out the world at war, and Desamblancx himself in a white smock would come down from the atelier where the workmen with patient art were tooling the morocco bindings. They worked on during the war, mostly for the love of their ancient and honourable calling, and the old binder himself tried to teach his art to certain youths whom the war had deprived of work, organizing a class to which he went every afternoon. He always had a volume in his hand, and he caressed and fondled its morocco back lovingly all the while he talked of books. Whenever I found a volume in one of the old stalls I took it straight to him and waited with some anxiety for that expression in his eyes which told me, before he had spoken a word, whether I had been lucky or merely once again a fool. He knew editions as a racing gentleman knows the pedigrees of horses, or a baseball devotee the batting averages of the stars of the diamond. He could glance through any book and tell you if a single engraving was missing. He knew the history of every rare title-page, and was ever tearing up and sacrificing volumes in order that, assembling all their oddities, he might produce the perfect copy.

He had that respect for the literary art which demanded

that it respect itself, and present itself in a dress worthy of its noble rank. It was only now and then that he found a book worthy of full morocco; if in all respects, as to contents, printing, paper, all, it was not up to the standard, into half-morocco it went, and when his fingers touched the paper and detected it to be of wood-pulp he flung it aside in disgust, as if it sickened him, and would give it no dress at all. He could not approve of our American way of binding in cloth—*cartonné*. He thought books should be *brochés*, and put on probation for a few years; if they amounted to anything they would make their way in the world, and then it would be time to bind them. He gloried in his own calling and made of it a rare and exquisite art, and worked for the love of it, strange anachronism that he was! . . .

It was only at Desamblancx's, or in the old bookstalls like Nobel's in the Rue de la Tulipe, or in the studios of the artists, that I could escape the damning thing that let its pall down on the earth the moment I awoke in the morning and remembered. With the departure of the Marquis and the Baron and M. Francqui, and with Gibson and de Leval gone, life seemed to pause for a moment, and there were for a while only little things to occupy one. Even potatoes lost their preoccupying interest, for a supply had been sent in from Holland; we had been expecting them, and one afternoon in the Rue de la Régence, there not far from the old church of the Sablon, the long file of hooded women waiting at the *magasin communal* were chattering gaily, like starlings, and presently they trooped away in the rain, their wooden shoes clattering almost joyously, each carrying a bag filled with potatoes. It was a happy spectacle, for the poor were not so hungry that night.

The suffering, however, was increasing in the city, where extreme and sordid poverty had been almost unknown. There are no slums in Brussels as we know them in New York or Chicago or Boston, or as they are known in London and Liverpool and Glasgow and Edinburgh. Often when American visitors with a taste for sociology came to town and asked to be shown the slums, they could only be directed or conducted to those poorer quarters which, in comparison with what they had seen and studied in other cities, were, after all, so clean—without that haggard, woe-begone air of squalid poverty. I cannot explain the phenomenon except by hazarding the theory that it seemed that way because

the Belgians are such a cleanly folk, washing and scrubbing and scouring and polishing all the day long. There was poverty there, alas! as there is everywhere, and as there will continue to be until economists and statesmen and peoples grasp a distinction so simple that it is not, perhaps, after all so strange that it has been so universally overlooked—the distinction, that is, between private property and public property. But if the cleanly and frugal Belgians knew how to hide their poverty, the hardship of the war was beginning, nevertheless, to be more and more apparent. School-teachers noticed that the children could no longer give their wonted attention to their lessons, they were so often hungry; now and then one of them would faint for lack of nourishment. The working men were growing thinner. Physicians were noting an increase in tuberculosis and other diseases that flourish where there is malnutrition. There was no butter, not enough milk for the babies, and potatoes had been, and indeed continued to be, scarce, even with quantities in the land rotting because the distribution of them had been almost automatically prevented by the Kartoffelzentrale.

The history of potatoes alone, indeed, under the German occupation, would provide a life-work for an economist and a philosopher. The walls bore many *affiches* explaining the reasons for the measures the Governor-General had decreed in regard to them—*affiches* denying that any potatoes had been shipped to Germany, declaring that the potatoes were being reserved exclusively for the use of the working classes, imploring the easier classes to replace potatoes by other foods,* forbidding

* The French text:

AVIS

Il me revient qu'on a tenté de faire accroire à la population que des stocks considérables de pommes de terre auraient été exportés de Belgique en Allemagne et que, pour cette raison, l'approvisionnement de la population civile rencontre des difficultés. Toutes les insinuations de ce genre sont contraires à la vérité. En tout et seulement à titre provisoire, il n'a été expédié que 150 tonnes de pommes de terre à destination de l'ouest de l'Allemagne; en outre, 5500 tonnes ont été envoyées en France. Ce total est insignifiant comparativement aux 1,700,000 tonnes qui représentent la production moyenne du territoire du Gouvernement général. La diminution de stocks de pommes de terre est la conséquence naturelle de l'augmentation de la consommation humaine et des besoins de l'alimentation animale.

Je mets expressément en garde contre la propagation de faux bruits concernant les causes de la disette de pommes de terre et je sévirai avec la plus grande rigueur contre les coupables.

Jusqu'à nouvel ordre et, en particulier, jusqu'à ce que les stocks qui, selon toute probabilité, existent encore et sont tenus cachés, aient été découverts, les

hotels and restaurants to serve potatoes that had been peeled

provisions indigènes de pommes de terre seront, de préférence et autant que possible, mises à la disposition des classes ouvrières et nécessiteuses dont la subsistance est essentiellement fondée sur cet aliment. Il en sera de même des pommes de terre qui pourront être importées de l'étranger." Quant aux classes plus aisées de la population, j'espère qu'elles auront conscience du devoir social que leur impose la situation présente et que, pour se nourrir, elles recourront, le plus possible, à d'autres aliments, moins à la portée des petites bourses.

J'attends, d'autre part, que les autorités communales belges m'aident consciencieusement et énergiquement à appliquer les mesures que j'ai ordonnées uniquement dans l'intérêt de la population belge, en vue de régler et d'assurer son approvisionnement.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,

BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

Translation

NOTICE

Word comes to me that there have been attempts to make the population believe that considerable stocks of potatoes have been exported from Belgium to Germany and that, for this reason, the feeding of the population is meeting with difficulties. All insinuations of this nature are contrary to the truth. In all, and only as a temporary measure, there have been exported only 150 tons of potatoes to the west of Germany; besides this, 5500 tons have been sent to France. This total is insignificant in comparison with the 1,700,000 tons that represent the average production of the territory of the General Government. The diminution of the stocks of potatoes is the natural consequence of the increase in human consumption and of the needs of live stock.

I give express warning against the propagation of false rumours concerning the causes of the scarcity of potatoes, and I shall be rigorously severe with the guilty.

Until further orders, and particularly until all the stocks that in all probability exist and are hidden have been discovered, the native supply of potatoes will be by preference and as much as possible placed at the disposal of the labouring and needy classes whose subsistence is based essentially on this product. There will even be potatoes imported from abroad. As for the easier classes of the population, I hope that they will be conscious of the duty which the present situation imposes on them, and that for their nourishment they will have recourse as much as possible to other foods less within the reach of small purses.

On the other hand, I expect the Belgian communal authorities conscientiously and energetically to aid me in applying the measures that I have decreed, particularly in the interest of the Belgian population, with a view to regulating and assuring its food-supply.

The Governor-General in Belgium,

BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

AVIS

Par arrêté du 5 décembre 1915 (Bulletin officiel des lois et arrêtés, p. 1405), j'avais ordonné de procéder au relevé des stocks de pommes de terre pouvant servir à l'approvisionnement de la population civile.

Il me revient que certains détenteurs de pommes de terre n'ont pas déclaré tous leurs stocks. Parmi ceux-ci, il en est qui ont supposé avoir le droit de ne pas déclarer les quantités réservées à leur consommation personnelle, à l'alimentation de leurs animaux et à la plantation. Cette opinion est erronée. L'obligation de déclarer porte sur toutes les provisions dont le total dépasse 50 kilogrammes.

Tenant compte de cette erreur, j'ai arrêté ce qui suit, afin d'épargner les

before cooking.* But all to no purpose: economic laws would

peines prévues par l'article 4 de l'arrêté du 5 décembre 1915 (Bulletin officiel des lois et arrêtés, p. 1405), à tous les détenteurs de pommes de terre qui compléteront leur déclaration conformément à la vérité.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,

BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

ARRÊTÉ

Le peine prévue par l'article 4 de l'arrêté du 5 décembre 1915 (Bulletin officiel des lois et arrêtés, p. 1405), ne sera pas applicable aux personnes qui, le 18 mars 1916, au plus tard, rectifieront leurs anciennes déclarations, soit inexactes, soit incomplètes, se rapportant aux quantités de pommes de terre détenues par elles. Dans ce cas, les stocks de pommes de terre non encore déclarés ne seront pas confisqués.

La déclaration rectificative doit être remise à l'administration communale sur le territoire de laquelle les pommes de terre se trouvent.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,

BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

Translation

NOTICE

By the order of December 5, 1915 (Official Bulletin of Laws and Orders, p. 1405), I gave instructions that stocks of potatoes available for the feeding of the civil population be declared.

I am now given to understand that certain holders of potatoes have not declared their entire stocks. Among them are those who have felt that they had the right not to declare the stocks reserved for their personal consumption, for the feeding of their animals, and for planting. This opinion is wrong. The obligation to declare applies to *all* stocks over and above 50 kilograms.

Taking this error into consideration I have issued the following order, in order to spare those holders of potatoes who complete their declarations in conformity with the truth the penalties provided in Article 4 of the order of December 5, 1915 (Official Bulletin of Laws and Orders, p. 1405).

The Governor-General in Belgium,

BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

ORDER

The penalty provided in Article 4 of the order of December 5, 1915 (Official Bulletin of Laws and Orders, p. 1405), will not be applicable to persons who, not later than March 18, 1916, correct their former declarations, whether they are inexact or incomplete, making their report on the quantity of potatoes held by them. In this case the stocks of potatoes not yet declared will not be confiscated.

The corrected declaration must be returned to the communal administration of the territory where the potatoes are held.

The Governor-General in Belgium,

BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

ARRÊTÉ

concernant le mode d'emploi des pommes de terre dans les hôtels et restaurants

Article premier.

Dans les hôtels et restaurants, il est défendu de servir, soit comme plat à

move majestically and contemptuously on in their own indifferent way, just as if there were no Hague Conventions or German Governments of Occupation in the world; and the peasants, still clinging to the belief that the Germans only meant to seize them, would not declare their stocks, nor ever did.

There was nothing to be done about it: we had tried, Villalobar and I, by unofficial suggestions, to have the measures of the Zentralen relaxed, but the Germans, while realizing that the results of their plan were bad, clung to them with stubborn persistence. It was suggested that the potatoes be turned over to the communal authorities, but no, that could not be done; they must be distributed according to the German method or be left to rot—and they were left to rot, while the poor went hungry.

The communal authorities, and especially those of the agglomeration of Brussels, were subjected to constant indignities. A burgomaster of one of the communes in the Brussels agglomeration in writing letters always employed a French form that is,

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part, soit comme mets complémentaires, des pommes de terre épluchées *avant la cuisson.*

Art. 2.

Les infractions à la disposition précédente seront punies d'une peine d'emprisonnement (de police ou correctionnel) de six mois au plus ou d'une amende pouvant atteindre 5000 mark. Les deux peines pourront aussi être appliquées simultanément.

Art. 3.

Ces infractions seront jugées par les tribunaux militaires allemands.

Le Gouverneur général en Belgique,

BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Général-Colonel.*

Translation

ORDER

concerning the method of using potatoes in hotels and restaurants

Article 1.

In hotels and restaurants it is forbidden to serve, either separately or as a side dish, potatoes peeled before cooking.

Art. 2.

Infringements of the preceding order will be punished by imprisonment (police or corrective) for not more than six months or by a fine of not more than 5000 marks. The two penalties may also be applied together.

Art. 3.

These infringements will be judged by the German military tribunals.

The Governor-General in Belgium,

BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1916. BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

I believe, a relic of revolutionary days: "*Salut et respect.*" And the Germans objected—said he must employ the consecrated form: "*Veuillez, monsieur, agréer l'expression,*" etc.

And yet, latterly, when the German authorities addressed letters to the municipal authorities they did not observe any form of civility whatever. The Germans at that time—the end of February 1916—were not in good humour. The great offensive predicted by Mr. Walcott had begun; it was to be, according to one German officer, the *letzte Schlag*. The weather was very cold, the days were dark. There was snow one day and the boulevards all frostily white by evening. The whole town was restless and excited; every one was filled with foreboding. What if—after all——?

Then on Saturday, February 26, the news ran through Brussels that the Germans had won a stupendous victory at Verdun. The next morning there was an *affiche*.*

The city was plunged in gloom all that Sunday. And yet after a few hours the indomitable Belgian spirit arose. In a club in a certain little street in the lower town, where a group of Bruxellois were gathered, all sitting about that evening in sadness, they began almost spontaneously to shrug their shoulders.

"*Ce n'est pas vrai,*" said one.

"*C'est de la blague,*" said another.

This is the *affiche*:

NOUVELLES PUBLIÉES PAR LE GOUVERNEMENT GÉNÉRAL ALLEMAND

Prise du premier fort de Verdun

BERLIN, *le 26 février.* (Communiqué du Grand Quartier général.) Le fort blindé de Douaumont, le pilier nord-est de la ligne principale des fortifications permanentes de la place forte de Verdun, a été pris d'assaut hier après-midi par le régiment d'infanterie du Brandebourg No. 24; il est solidement au pouvoir des troupes allemandes.

LE GOUVERNEMENT GÉNÉRAL EN BELGIQUE.

Translation

NEWS PUBLISHED BY THE GERMAN GENERAL GOVERNMENT

The taking of the Principal Fort of Verdun

BERLIN, *February* 26. (*Communiqué* from General Headquarters.) The iron-clad fort of Douaumont, the north-east pillar of the principal line of fortifications of the fortified place of Verdun, was taken by assault yesterday afternoon by the 24th Brandenburg regiment of infantry; it is firmly in the hands of the German troops.

THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT IN BELGIUM.

"*Ils mentent,*" said a third. "*Ils ont besoin d'argent pour leur nouvel emprunt.*"

Then a man entered and said solemnly:

"*Messieurs, je viens expressément pour vous dire que ce n'est pas vrai. Et même si cela était, ce n'est rien, puisque le fort à Verdun n'est d'aucune importance. Ça!' Mais ça a été tout à fait démodé il y a quinze ans. Ce n'est rien.*"

And so they persuaded themselves. It was Brussels through and through, with its insouciance, its inexhaustible optimism. The next day, when two men met in the lower town and one asked:

"*Quelle nouvelle de la guerre?*" the response was:

"*Quelle guerre?*"

There was a rumour in town that a wireless telegram from the Eiffel Tower had been intercepted, saying that the French had retaken the fort; and yet, no one knew, not even any one at the Politische Abteilung. Then on Monday the Germans said, "It is not finished yet." But on Tuesday the story of the Eiffel Tower message was denied, and even the most optimistic felt the general depression.

The snow had turned to rain, the trees in the deserted Bois were dripping lonesomely, the air was heavy, the skies leaden. Day and night the cannon rumbled like distant thunder. . . .

Then I met Hermancito in the Avenue Marnix. He always had the latest news. They would take Verdun, he said. . . . I climbed to the attic where a French painter I knew had his little studio. Out of his garret window one could see Ste.-Gudule and all the tiled roofs to the west. He had on an old sweater and was in slippers, and his pipe was going. We talked a while, and of course, somehow, the word Paris was pronounced. He turned suddenly about; his face had gone white; he took his pipe from his lips and with a terrible rage he said:

"*Paris! Mais ils nous payeront cela!*"[1]

XII. "AFTER THE WAR!"

THE *letzte Schlag*, however, had failed, as Brussels knew when a fortnight had passed and Verdun had not fallen. And the people once more found courage, even though the newspapers

printed in Brussels never permitted a cheerful bit of intelligence to appear. They had a daily article on the progress of military events, artfully written as though from an unbiased standpoint, but with a tendency to depress and discourage that was remorseless, implacable, almost diabolical. They gave the German *communiqués* and the French and British *communiqués*, especially when these latter acknowledged reverses and defeats. And the people learned to read those twisted and tortured tales as people learn to read between the lines of a censored Press, though there was not so much a censored Press in Belgium as there was an inspired and subsidized Press, the basest prostitution to which human intelligence and the arts of writing and printing can be put. Perhaps, indeed, the Brussels folk exaggerated in an inverse ratio; they always thought that their friends and allies outside had good news of which they knew nothing, and they had a confidence almost touching that on the other side of the line in those March days, with their *giboulées*, their snows and rains and winds and bursts of sunshine, things were all going well. . . .

The walls were covered with those *affiches* beginning *à la peine de mort*; one day brought thirty-nine condemnations, eight of them victims shot at Mons for "counting trains"—another phrase that had been added to Belgium's coterie speech. One of the victims was a woman, and she was condemned, not because she had counted trains, but because she had not betrayed her husband, who had counted trains. The Germans were continuing to requisition indigenous food-stuffs, butter and pork, and now they began to seize the great patient draught-dogs that hauled the carts—those gentle, hard-working friends of the peasant; they were taken for use in the German army, though the Belgians found cause for hope even in that, and insisted that the Germans intended to use them for food in Germany.

The Cardinal had returned from Rome, had issued another pastoral, and the printing establishment that had printed it for His Eminence had been raided and every one concerned—except the Cardinal—arrested. A week later the Cardinal's private secretary, the Abbé Louein, was arrested on the charge of having aided Le Mot du Soldat, an organization formed to obtain personal news of soldiers in the Belgian army.

M. Davignon, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, had died at Nice; Maître Théodor had been released from his German

prison and was in Switzerland. Such were the bits of news that found their way into the land that was being ground down under a heel heavier than that which had ground down Venice and Lombardy when they were under Austrian rule. People lived on some way, with one phrase constantly on their lips: "*Après la guerre!*"

After the war! What vast schemes and projects, what gratified revenge, what dreams of joy that phrase contained! The people turned their thoughts and their hopes into that future where, after this horrid interruption, they could resume life again. They would breathe again, after that choking atmosphere; they would go on journeys, make holidays, laugh, play, be happy —after the war. But the reality was always there—in those officers swanking along the boulevard, in those soldiers marching and singing, in those *Polizei* with their spiked, squat helmets, boots, belts, revolvers, long knives, heavy rifles with fixed bayonets, their air of brutality; I used to fancy how they would look tramping down Broadway or in Pennsylvania Avenue or along the Lake Front. How would Americans feel? Could they realize what the occupation of a city means? No, no one could do that except, perhaps, some old Italian of Venice or Lombardy who could remember Ravetsky, whose rule was not so long as that Belgium knew. Yes, the reality was there, and if one fled the spectacle to go to Ravenstein or to the Forêt or to Groenendael, or even down the road toward Waterloo or out to pretty Vlesenbeek, and fell each time more captive to the charm of the red roofs of the Flemish landscape, even then one must hear the distant thunder of the guns, saluting the ineradicable cruelty and hopeless stupidity of man along a front that stretched from the North Sea to the Vosges.

XIII. THE "RAVITAILLEMENT" IN DANGER

By the middle of March our three envoys who had gone with the Governor-General's assurances to London had passed over to the Continent; the Marquis had gone on to Madrid, and the Baron Lambert and M. Francqui were waiting in Paris for his return. Meanwhile, in the midst of all the rumours that flew about in the darkness of Brussels, Mr. Hoover came over from London with the news that the whole affair of the requisitions

was practically settled. The Marquis, on his return, would bring the formal response of the British Government, but as Mr. Hoover had been privy to the preparation of this document, he could give me most reassuring information as to its character. So that we seemed to have got safely over another shoal, though in such stormy waves as those through which we were trying to navigate the bark that was freighted with the hopes of Belgium we could never be sure or take anything for granted, and, with the curious superstition that is revived in man by the excitement and anxiety of high enterprises, and grows more and more rife in time of war, we should no more have assumed that things would go well than we would have lighted three cigarettes with one match.

"All that I know," said Mr. Hoover, pausing and glancing at his watch as he paced the floor of my room on a day of heavy snow, "is that at eleven o'clock on the morning of March 24, 1916, the *ravitaillement* is still going on."

Mr. Hoover had come over to be on the ground when the discussions were in progress, and he could bring all the gossip, of which there was just then a great deal, of all the hazards and dangers resulting from all sorts of conflicting ambitions that threatened the great work into which he had poured all his enthusiasm, and for which he had made so many personal sacrifices. At one moment so intense were some of the conflicting ambitions involved that he had written to propose that the Americans withdraw in favour of some one else, but to this the British Government would not listen for an instant. The discouragements were many, and often of such a nature as to make us sick at heart. For my own part, I had long since placed above every other possible consideration the fate of the seven million Belgians whose lives depended on our feeding them, and I had only to turn my eyes toward them in any exigency to be able to put aside every other consideration; I had them constantly before me—their sufferings, their sorrows, their great and tragic need. When Mr. Hoover came to Brussels he would go down and have a look at the line before the soup-kitchens and come back saying that we must find a way.

He was projecting a journey to Lille. "Eating dogs down there," he said laconically that morning, as we talked of the conditions in the city so near the front. Infant mortality had

increased 25 per cent. It was difficult to secure sufficient allotments of food for Northern France, and Mr. Hoover wished to see for himself so that he could return and speak as one having authority. Already many were being brought from there to Brussels hospitals, wholly demented.

While he was in Brussels he had many interviews, of course, with the German officers of the Vermittlungstelle, who were being so constantly urged by *Messieurs les militaires* to inaugurate more rigid measures in regard to the *ravitaillement*, when that could be done without interfering with the food itself. The military men were growing almost savage in their insistence that the Belgians labour for them, and while that was a matter that was outside the scope of the C.R.B., the delegates were constantly made to feel and to suffer, at least in their sympathies, the various pressures the German commanders sought to exercise.

But what did affect the C.R.B. was the intention, announced just at that time, to detail a German officer and attach him as a cicerone to each of the delegates. This system had always prevailed in the north of France, and it had been accepted by the C.R.B. as one of the necessities of the case, more excusable by the fact that the work there was carried on in the zone of actual military operations. There these ciceroni, as I have said, never left the delegates alone for a second, day or night; it was an intolerable relation; it would have been an intolerable relation had the ciceroni been very angels of light. At the end of a fortnight the delegates would return to Brussels nervous wrecks, so nervous and unstrung that they seemed like to burst into tears. It had been impossible to secure older men to accept the posts; none but young men animated by a certain spirit of adventure would consent to do so. And now when the Germans proposed to inaugurate the same system in the Occupationgebiet, Mr. Hoover promptly and determinedly said no; to that he would never consent—rather than that the whole work might cease. The demand was not pressed. Mr. Hoover had learned, as others were to learn, that the only tone the Germans could comprehend was that which they employed themselves. . . .

One day, late in the afternoon, two motors, piled high with baggage and flying the Spanish flag, rolled along the boulevard, and inside were the Marquis and the Baron, lifting their hats to us as they passed. And the next day there was Villalobar again,

smart in a morning coat, come, after many moving accidents by field and flood, to tell me the news of the world outside. One who had come back into our narrow and stifling prison, after days spent at The Hague, London, Paris, and Madrid, with the gossip of the dinner-tables and chancelleries of the capitals, who had seen Their Majesties in the austere simplicity of their villa in the sand-dunes, who had been the guest of the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough—she had had a deep interest in the Marquis from his youth—was sure to have much to tell; and as Villalobar knew how to tell stories, enlivening them by his humour and by his power of minute observation, never a detail, never one of the thousand amusing, ridiculous, or pathetic little incidents of the human comedy escaping him, there were, of course, long hours to bring up the arrears. He brought back the note containing the favourable reply of the British Government of which Mr. Hoover had already told me, and to conclude that *histoire* there remained now only the formal interview with Baron von der Lancken.

M. Francqui had arrived home too, and there were other hours with him in which he could describe in his witty way, and even enact from time to time, the human comedy as he saw it—a comedy which even in those tragic moments lent itself to much that was ridiculous in the antics of the jigging men who were playing it.

Mr. Hoover went down to Lille with Mr. Poland, and he came back sick with what he had seen and with plans for increasing the importations of food to aid the suffering French. And he had done another thing that to me was an immense relief. When our problems seemed for the moment all to have been solved I broached another question that had long been on my heart; it concerned the great, patient draught-dogs, those that the Germans had not requisitioned. They turned such pathetic eyes on me from under their carts, in what I could imagine as a dumb appeal:

"*Ce qu'il y a de meilleur en l'homme c'est le chien.*"

I had a suspicion that those dogs had not enough to eat: I could share my own rations with my own dog, but what of those dogs of the street that worked so hard, leading a dog's life indeed, with no trade union, no *syndicat*, nothing to represent them, but trusting wholly to the capricious generosity of man?

"Oh," said Mr. Hoover, to my joy, "I've already thought of that. We are organizing a department to issue biscuits to *chiens de service*, but *chiens de luxe* must depend on the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables."

So the C.R.B. did not forget even the dogs of Belgium. Mr. Hoover, in speaking during one of those days of the work of the Commission, summed it all up under three heads. It had organized an almost perfect machine for securing justice and equality in the distribution of food, so that the poor had thereby been fed and kept up to normal physical standard, enabling them to offer spiritual resistance to the invasion; it had provided a moral rallying-point in the communes; its delegates as eye-witnesses had acted as a constant restraint on Kreischefs and so prevented much brutality. Of the one hundred and fifty men who had thus far entered the Commission's service in Belgium, two were in asylums for the insane and thirty were suffering from nervous breakdown. And in addition to the one hundred and fifty in Belgium, there were one hundred in the offices of the Commission in London, Rotterdam, and New York, and five thousand local committees in America and elsewhere in the world. To all this he might have added that the indirect effect on the cause of the Allies of the appeals these committees were constantly making was by no means inconsiderable.

It was then that, feeling that our other troubles were settled, we devised the plan of a fortnightly meeting of the representatives of the C.N. and the C.R.B. with the Protecting Ministers, to avoid in the future the repetition of certain misunderstandings that had sometimes threatened to arise, as misunderstandings will arise whenever men meet, even when they all speak the same language; when they speak different languages they are more apt to arise than ever, and we wished to avoid any misunderstandings between such good friends as Belgians and Americans had come to be. We felt, I should not say happy, for that is a word that had fled the vocabulary of our world since that terrible August of 1914, but relieved by the solutions we had found for our difficulties.

We settled it all there in the American Legation in a meeting at which the countless details were discussed—a meeting that lasted all morning and far into afternoon, until M. Francqui,

drawing out his watch, sprang to his feet and startled us by exclaiming:

"*Mais mon Dieu! Est-ce que ces messieurs déjeunent?*"

Then all the afternoon we discussed it again, and at tea-time, just as we were drawing a long breath, startling news came from Holland—the Dutch army was remobilizing! There were panic and excitement everywhere! Troops were massing along the frontier because, as we were assured, England had sent an ultimatum to Holland and was about to invade the kingdom! And as if that were not enough, we had the news also that the Germans had blown up the *Sussex* and that diplomatic relations between Washington and Berlin were now about to be broken off. Mr. Hoover hurried off that night to London.

And then, when the men of the C.R.B. came to the Legation that evening for the reception my wife was holding in their honour, René Janssen, the young Dane who acted as courier for the Commission, came in from the frontier with the news that the excitement was all over; there was word from Marshall Langhorne at The Hague saying that the crisis was past. Perhaps it was because it was All Fools' Day, and, as Villalobar had just been saying, everybody in the world had gone crazy.

XIV. THE UNIVERSITY OF GHENT

THERE were so many startling sensations in our world that enterprises of great pitch and moment now and then passed unnoticed. When I read my notes of those days I am sometimes amazed to find that I was often scribbling down at great length and in silly detail incidents of which the ultimate importance was very small, though they seemed of importance at the time, while I allowed to pass unnoted, or with only a word of casual reference, some event that bore heavily on the destiny of man. It must be that the ironic spirits, in their *espièglerie*, or in their justifiable contempt for the intelligence of man, continually spite him and use him for their amusement.

For instance, in my notes for the year under notice I find but brief and insufficient references to the first of those events that were destined in their ensemble to form the most evil of all the deeds committed by the Germans in Belgium. On March 25

there appeared in *La Belgique*, the organ of the General Government, this *arrêté* of a German general:

UNIVERSITÉ DE GAND

Arrêté du Commandant en chef de la IV^e^ armée, prince Albrecht de Wurtemberg:

En modification de l'art. 5 de l'arrêté royal du 9 décembre 1849, il est arrêté ce qui suit:

Les cours de l'Université de Gand se donneront en langue flamande. Le chef de l'administration civile près le Gouverneur général en Belgique pourra, par exception, autoriser l'emploi d'une autre langue dans certaines branches de l'enseignement. Il est chargé de publier les dispositions réglementaires destinées à assurer l'exécution du présent arreté.*

Why this sudden concern for the education of youth in Belgium? Why this solicitude for the culture of a people who were being harried and harassed and imprisoned and put to death? What military necessity was it that required a German general to interfere in the curriculum of a university there in an occupied territory, in the midst of savage warfare, in a city under martial law, and in such abnormal conditions that the University, unable to continue its functions, had been obliged to close its doors? What had the commander of an army in the field, there in the Etappengebiet, to do with education?

The subject, to be sure, was not new to Belgians; it was an element of the old difference between the Flemish and the Walloons, and the Belgians—and the Flemish first among them—saw at once the meaning of this manœuvre that wore the innocent air of a mere academical measure. The Governor-General had already and long since ordered that in the budget for the year 1915 there be included provisions for transforming the University of Ghent into a Flemish university, and at the New Year he had published a statement that foreshadowed the order of Prince Albrecht of Würtemberg. The statement would have it appear that the Governor-General was inspired by concern for the proper

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UNIVERSITY OF GHENT

Order of the Commander of the Fourth Army, Prince Albrecht of Würtemberg:

In modification of Article 5 of the Royal Order of December 9, 1849, it is ordered as follows:

The courses in the University of Ghent will be given in the Flemish language. The chief of the civil administration near the Governor-General in Belgium may, by exception, authorize the use of another language in certain branches of instruction. He is charged with the publication of regulations destined to the execution of this order

education of Flemish youth and for the realization of the ideals of their race.*

The sequel, a year later, showed that this act was but the entering wedge of a policy intended to divide the Belgian nation, and ultimately to annex its territory to the German Empire. The policy was inaugurated, as all particularly odious policies

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UNIVERSITÉ FLAMANDE

La question relative à l'érection d'une Université flamande, question qui à la suite des résolutions proposées à la Chambre belge, s'était résumée en une réclamation visant à la transformation de l'Université de Gand en établissement flamand, vient de faire un pas décisif en avant.

En effet, M. le Gouverneur général a ordonné que, dans le budget pour l'exercice 1915, soient inscrites les sommes nécessaires pour acheminer la transformation de l'Université de Gand en haute école flamande. En outre, les mesures propres à organiser la réforme de l'enseignement devront être préparées et commencées avec le concours de personnalités compétentes.

C'est ainsi qu'un des vœux essentiels du mouvement flamand approche de sa réalisation, un vœu dont les Belges aussi ont, à la longue, dû reconnaître la légitimité. En 1840, il y a précisément soixante-quinze ans, la première proposition de loi, tendant à l'organisation d'un enseignement supérieur en langue flamande, fut soumise aux Chambres, tandis que la dernière, celle des députés Franck, Cauwelaert et Huysmans, date de 1912–1913.

Il faut espérer que, désormais, tous les milieux intéressés voudront unir leurs efforts pour envisager et peser avec calme la préparation de mesures aptes à amener une solution conservant à la centenaire Alma Mater le prestige scientifique et la valeur morale qui font sa gloire en lui assurant, en même temps et mieux que jusqu'ici, les moyens d'être la protagoniste de la culture flamande et la grande semeuse du savoir et du pouvoir en ce pays de Flandre.

La Belgique, No. 408.

Translation

FLEMISH UNIVERSITY

The question relative to the erection of a Flemish university—a question which, in accordance with the resolutions proposed in the Belgian Chamber, had been embodied in a demand calling for the transformation of the University of Ghent into a Flemish establishment—has just taken a decisive step in advance.

Indeed, the Governor-General has ordered that in the budget for the expenses of 1915, there be provided the sums immediately necessary for the transformation of the University of Ghent into a high Flemish school. Moreover, the proper measures for organizing the reform in instruction will be devised and undertaken with the assistance of competent persons.

It is thus that one of the principal purposes of the Flemish movement approaches its realization, a purpose the legitimacy of which the Belgians also must all along have recognized. In 1840, exactly seventy-five years ago, the first draft of a law providing for the organization of a superior education in the Flemish language was submitted to the Chambers, while the last, that of the Deputies Franck, Cauwelaert, and Huysmans, is dated 1912–1913.

It is to be hoped that henceforth all the classes interested will unite their efforts in order calmly to plan and to consider the preparation of appropriate measures to reach a solution, conserving to the secular Alma Mater the scientific prestige and the moral value which is the basis of its glory, assuring to it at the same time, and better than heretofore, the means of being the protagonist of Flemish culture and the great disseminator of knowledge and of power in this land of Flanders.

of the German Government were inaugurated, with the unctuous hypocrisy that is the essential quality of the German official lie. Whenever they adopted the pious tone it was an infallible sign that some new devilry was brewing; whenever they announced in horror and surprise that the English or the French had performed some ugly and unheard-of deed it meant that they were about to perpetrate that deed themselves—just as, a fortnight before they used asphyxiating gas for the first time in history, they announced at Brussels that the French had used it. Thus their sudden warm concern for the Flemings deceived no one, least of all the Flemings themselves.

The University of Ghent had been for a long time the centre about which the Flamingant movement turned. There were two State universities in Belgium, one in Liége and one in Ghent; both were French, in the sense that French was the language used officially in both, although certain courses of lectures had been given in Flemish at Ghent. For long years the leading Flamingants had laboured to have the University of Ghent transformed into a Flemish institution. It was proposed at one time to establish a new and exclusively Flemish university at Antwerp, which is the centre of the Flemish life and of the Flemish movement; but there were no funds available for such an ambitious scheme. Then, in March of 1911, the Flamingants in parliament brought forward a Bill enacting that at the University of Ghent all the lectures be given in Flemish. There was one of those bitter discussions which only questions relating to race, language, or religion can incite, and when the measure was found to be too radical to command the support of a majority a new Bill was presented that recognized the two languages as equal, and lectures were to be given in both, even if a double staff of professors was necessary. This too was found to be too radical, and a third proposal was brought forward that the University be gradually transformed into a Flemish institution. The measure was pending when the war came on and put an end to public discussion in Belgium, for the Flemish and Walloons closed their ranks and stood shoulder to shoulder against the invader.

When the purpose of the Governor-General was revealed a protest was immediately sent to him, written, probably, by M. Louis Franck, a deputy for Antwerp and just then Acting Burgomaster for that city, whose name headed the list of signa-

tures. M. Franck is a lawyer of Antwerp, a Flemish man of culture and erudition, and recognized as the leader of the Flemish movement in Belgium. He is a strong, broad-shouldered man, with a great flowing red beard and a flashing eye, and endowed with all the qualities that make a fascinating popular leader. He speaks Flemish, French, German, and English with equal facility, and is a remarkable orator. From the beginning of the war he had worked untiringly for his people: he had taken on his broad shoulders the direction of the affairs of his own city; he was a member of the Comité National and rendered services to the *ravitaillement* that were invaluable. He was always in intimate relations with the delegates of the C.R.B., and was popular among them. He wielded a large personal influence in Belgium, and as the leader of the Flemish movement, who had himself been in the Chamber of Deputies three years before the war, led the movement for the transformation of the University. The Germans thought, no doubt, that he and the other Flamingants would welcome their intervention in favour of the old and darling project. Their first deception came when this very leader was the first to remark their hypocrisy and to resent their interference. He told them bluntly that the Flemish question was one that concerned Belgians, not Germans, and that Belgians would settle it among themselves and to suit themselves when the Germans were out of the country. The protest—and it was not to be the last in what is the darkest chapter of the whole dark history of these times—was another of those historic documents of the Belgian struggle for liberty, and it places Louis Franck among the first and most intelligent of the nation's patriots. In a flash of political insight he saw that the act was but the first manœuvre of a Machiavellian design to divide the Belgian people and to destroy the Belgian nation. It was not enough that the country be violated, invaded, ravished, and despoiled, stripped of all its resources, its industry ruined, and its machinery, even to the last belt and the last wheel, carried off to Germany, not enough that its cities and villages be bombarded and burned, not enough that its people be murdered; all that was not enough to satisfy the insensate savagery that laid waste the land—the very soul of the nation must be destroyed. This protest was signed by the presidents of the two great Flemish *Bunds*, which have for their object the encouragement of Flemish

culture, and by several members of the former commission for the establishment of a Flemish university. After this instant response of the Flamingants themselves there were protests from all the professors of the University and the leading personages in Belgium. *De Vlaamsche Leeuw*, the little forbidden newspaper, excoriated the manœuvre.

The Governor-General replied to the protest of the Flamingants, and then proceeded to the execution of the measures; and there was more resistance. Among the professors who taught at Ghent were the historians Paul Frédéricq and Henri Pirenne, both celebrated in the intellectual circles of Europe and America. Professor Frédéricq was Flemish, imbued with the ideals of his race. Professor Pirenne was a scholar whose monumental history of Belgium is the authoritative work on the life of the sturdy little nation that had struggled up through the vicissitudes of a thousand years of turbulent history, determined to be free.

It was told everywhere in Belgium, until it became common talk, that when it was determined by the German authorities to set up a purely Flemish institution, Governor-General von Bissing sent for Professor Pirenne and promised him the most splendid and dazzling emoluments if he would accept the position of Rector of the University, and that Professor Pirenne replied that he would be pleased and honoured to accept the position "if the patent naming me is signed by my sovereign, His Majesty King Albert." The story was hardly convincing, and later Von Bissing himself denied it in a letter written to a Swedish philologist.*

The whole of the truth will not be known until Professors Frédéricq and Pirenne are freed and in a position to give to the world their version of the facts; but at any rate, when the order was given to reopen and to transform the University into a Flemish institution all the professors, led by Professors Frédéricq and Pirenne, refused to obey. The Germans resorted to force; the *Polizei* appeared, and on March 18, 1916, arrested Professors Frédéricq and Pirenne, took them to Brussels, and threw them into prison. Ere long they were deported to Germany, where they were provisionally interned in an officers' camp, and later

* *Vide* "The Imprisonment of the Ghent Professors," by Kr. Nydrop, Ph.D. Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1917), p. 88.

transferred to the prisoners' compounds at Holzminden and Güterslok, where they were treated like other civilian prisoners—numbered, marked, lodged, and fed like the rest, with no consideration shown to their fame, their achievements, their standing, or their age. Later on their lot seems to have been ameliorated, and they were treated with something of the respect that was their due.

The American Government interested itself in the fate of the two distinguished professors, and when I made inquiries at the Politische Abteilung I was informed that they had been deported as "undesirable"; no other explanation was given beyond an allusion to what was referred to as their "political activities." I should like to think that the interest shown by our Government had at least some effect in securing for them that better treatment which was later accorded, for it was stated that they had been allowed to go to Jena and to study there, and, after their experiences in Belgium, refresh their belief in the existence of a moral law by reading Kant, as it were, on the spot.

Another story was told at Brussels that would have it that before they were taken away the Governor-General ordered them to be brought before him, and that when Professor Frédéricq entered, Von Bissing, addressing him and speaking in Flemish, said:

"You see, Professor, I have learned Flemish since I have been here."

The reply was said to have been instantaneous—and in French:-

"And I," said Professor Frédéricq, "since you came, I have forgotten it."

The story was so good that I concluded at once that it must be apocryphal, and there is no doubt that it is, since the Governor-General said that he never saw either of the professors in his life. But that and the other story express the spirit that inspired the Flemish patriots. Not that they had forgotten their language or wished to; not that they had abandoned their efforts to promote it; but they would not have it used as a means of helping Germany to destroy the only nation where it is spoken or has a chance to develop.

I suppose that fully to understand the Flemish question one would have to be Flemish oneself. It is not wholly a question

of languages. The Belgians, indeed, are famous linguists; in the first place, they have two languages in general use—French and Flemish. Just to the north of them lies Holland, whose tongue is so akin to Flemish that the Belgians have no difficulty with it. The Flemish language has, too, certain similarities to the German, and it bears so close a resemblance in its roots to that part of our English tongue which is not of Latin derivation—that is, to the base of our language—that it is easy for the Flemish to learn English. The Flemish have no objection to speaking French when they possess it; it is the language of the Court and of the upper classes in Belgium. French was spoken in the Belgian Parliament by all, Flemish or Walloon—except, I believe, in the case of two deputies who were not sufficiently fluent in French to speak it publicly; when they spoke they used Flemish, and the Chamber listened sympathetically. In the Belgian courts French is used unless the accused in a criminal case or the witnesses insist on Flemish. All the street-signs in Belgium are lettered in both languages—though in Bruges and in Ghent the Germans ordered the French names stricken off. All laws and public documents are published in both languages, with the French text given first; the Germans, however, changed the order and printed the Flemish first.

It is said that no matter how many languages one knows, there are three things that one always does in one's own mother tongue—to wit, pray, count, and make love. I was talking one day about the Flemish question with a Belgian minister, himself a Fleming and one of the leading exponents of the Flemish movement. He spoke habitually in French, though until the age of twelve he had never known any language but Flemish. French was the language used in his home; his children, indeed, could not speak Flemish—a fact, as he whimsically avowed, with which his political adherents among the Flemish did not fail to reproach him. I asked him in what language he habitually thought.

"In French," he replied. "I made all my law studies in French; I don't even know the terms in Flemish; all the sequences of my thought in such affairs are in French."

"In what language do you count?" I said.

"In French," he replied.

I did not like to be too indiscreet, and of the three topics

which I have just cited as those on which one always thinks in one's mother tongue two of them seemed too intimate to raise.

"But," I ventured, "suppose, as happens sometimes to the best of us, you were suddenly to lose your temper, grow very angry—in what language would you swear?"

"Oh," he said without an instant's hesitation, "in Flemish, of course."

Flemish is the language of all the north and west of Belgium, and French the language of the south and east. In Wallonie the Walloons speak their French with a curious accent that goes back in the centuries for its origins. In Flanders Flemish is spoken in accents that differ sometimes from commune to commune. It is in Antwerp that the purest Flemish is spoken, but even there it differs in accent and intonation from the Dutch it so closely resembles. And yet the Flemish would have none of the Dutch; religion had much to do with that—the old conflict between the Catholic and the Orange. The Walloons would have none of the French either; even though their language is essentially the same, they were Belgian, and the Flemish and Walloons have always got on well enough together to form a nation. "*Wallon et Flamand sont des prénoms; le nom de famille est Belge,*" says an old adage of Brabant. They prefer to live together, and when there are little quarrels, to keep them in the family.

The Flemish movement, in the view of the most enlightened of its leaders, was, and in the true sense still is, not a political but a cultural movement, the effort of a race to develop its own powers and to realize its own destinies—though, like all those peculiar and baffling problems inherent in race differences, it has had its repercussion in politics, and politicians in Belgium have made use of it for their own needs, as politicians everywhere, frequently wanting in principles and feeling the need of issues, appeal to the ugly spirit of sectionalism and particularism. The fact that the language of the ruling classes, of the Court, of society, is French makes no difference to the Walloon peasants and working men; their language is French also. But with the Flemish peasant it is otherwise: sometimes he is prone to feel that he is at a disadvantage; he has an uneasy sense of inferiority. The Flemish lad conscripted for the army felt embarrassed by the fact that the officers and many of his comrades habitually spoke a language that he did not know. The fact sometimes

seemed to close the door of advancement to him; if he tried to learn French it was to speak it with a Flemish accent, and now and then be laughed at, and perhaps at the same time be accused by his own people of putting on airs, and the result of all this was a kind of resentment that any demagogue could easily fan into a flame.

The Flemish are conscious of their own glorious history; the story of Flanders from the battle of the Golden Spurs is a long story of resistance to French and Dutch and Austrian and Spanish domination. They have a great and wonderful tradition of art, glorified by the names of Rubens, Vandyke, Jordaens, Brouwer, and Teniers. They have a literature of their own in which, by such writers as Henrik Conscience, their heroism is celebrated. The Lion of Flanders is the oldest heraldic device in the world and the symbol of a brave folk that are not Dutch, nor anything but Flemish—and Belgian.

But there was another tendency that ran parallel to this, the tendency of particularism to mistake itself for democracy, and there were those who held that there should be a separation of administrative functions in the kingdom; the government in Flanders to be administered in Flemish, that in Wallonie in French. No such advance had been made in this direction as had been made in the matter of transforming the Ghent University; the movement had the support of some Socialists, even some Walloon Socialists, and others who were victims of the old confusion of particularism with democracy. But the majority saw more clearly; they feared disunion and a cleft in the nation, and opposed it.

And then the Germans came. They knew, long before they arrived, all the currents of political and social thought. The Politische Abteilung studied these problems with minute care and a Machiavellian intelligence. The transformation of the University of Ghent lay ready to their hands, to be used as the thin edge of the wedge which, as they hoped, would divide the Belgian people and enable them to kill the very soul of the nation they had already violated and despoiled. And the sequel showed that they wished to do more; Flanders, and even Holland, was included in the Pan-Germanic dream of conquest. Von Bissing had such great difficulty in procuring Flemish professors that he finally imported teachers from Holland and Germany, what

the French call *célébrités inconnues*, and they turned out to be, for the most part, Germans, disclosing a sinister design to transform the University of Ghent, not into a Flemish, but into a German university.

XV. THE "RAVITAILLEMENT" GOES ON

I HAD a letter from my colleague, Dr. van Dyke, at The Hague, saying that the news with regard to our relations with Germany was disquieting, that the tension was very great, that the President would not yield on the questions raised by the torpedoing of the *Sussex*, and that a rupture of diplomatic relations seemed inevitable. The volcano on which we had been sitting for eleven months seemed therefore at last on the point of eruption. It was in the midst of such uncertainty that we were about to take up the final discussions of the guarantees concerning the protection of the Belgian cattle from seizure by the German troops. My own feelings, had I cared to show them—and as an Anglo-Saxon I tried not to do that—were somehow expressed for me one afternoon at that very time by J——, the painter. We were in his studio, and I was looking at some of those quiet interiors he paints so well, evoking the sentiment and charm of little corners of peaceful *salons*, or cool dining-rooms with windows open on a garden—a kind of still life, in its way—when something was said about the war. J—— resented it as a tremendous and stupid interruption of the serious and vital affairs of life, and suddenly, as though he had had a seizure of some sort, he tugged at his hair with both hands, whirled round and cried out:

"*Et moi! Le peintre de la tranquillité!*"

As for me, however, a certain tranquillity was immediately enforced upon me by a trifling accident; I sprained my foot and was immobilized for weeks. It was unfortunate to be confined so stupidly to the house just when the spring was coming on, the woods all green, and their floors sprinkled with anemones as with snow. There were no regulations as to the spring as yet, unless the latest rule about dogs might be construed as having some relation to that subject. The Germans had decreed that all dogs be muzzled lest they bite somebody! *O Mores!*

One woman, we heard, had been fined a thousand marks for

having a griffon unmuzzled, and the thousand marks not being immediately forthcoming, her furniture was seized.

It was during those days, too, that I had a call from an elderly gentleman from Bruges, with snowy hair and beard, dressed scrupulously in black, even to black kid gloves, which he wore throughout the interview, speaking the most formal French with meticulous politeness, addressing me always in the third person. He had come to ask some little service, and somehow in the course of the conversation the name of de Menten de Horne was mentioned, and I remembered the lieutenant of Chasseurs who in the autumn of 1914 had sat there in that very chair, tired and downcast, in his dusty uniform of blue, and told me of the little drama that had been played in the asparagus-field near Malines—the peasant with uplifted fingers betraying him; then Dr. Georg Berghausen and the effort at exchange. I asked my visitor from Bruges if he knew the Baron, if he could give me any news of him.

"*Ah,*" he said, "*son colonel l'a fort blamé.*"

And then he told me how, when released by the Germans, de Menten de Horne had gone to Bruges, whence he had fled away, somehow got across the frontier, reached the army, had fought most bravely, and had been decorated by the King for gallant conduct in action.* The news did me good; it is reassuring always, and like a moral tonic, to have evidence that there is still justice in the world, and it was especially reassuring during those days in Belgium when one lived in the daily shadow of a great injustice.

The Marquis had come back from London, as I have said, with a memorandum of the English conditions in the matter of the requisitions, and, stiff as they were, the Germans, after much discussion, had virtually accepted them, and we were relieved on that score, when suddenly one day we learned that, while they would indeed accept them in principle, they would not admit the clause that bound them to recognize the C.N. and the C.R.B. as free from interference on their part; their response to our demands was prepared, but it had an unfortunate paragraph refusing any recognition of the two organizations. The Political Department was willing enough, but it seemed that there was constant friction between that department and other departments

* When I came out of Belgium I had the confirmation of this story at the Belgian front. The Baron had displayed such gallantry in action that he had been awarded the Order of Léopold and the Croix de Guerre with palm.—B. W.

of the General Government, and especially with the Zivilverwaltung—even German efficiency and organization not being altogether exempt from human envy and jealousy.

Only another conference with the Baron von der Lancken could dispose of the problem, and if the General Government should refuse to recede, then—the *ravitaillement* would be disposed of altogether; for without recognition the C.R.B. would not remain. As Mohammed could not go to the mountain just then the mountain generously agreed to come to Mohammed, and one afternoon the Baron von der Lancken, Dr. Reith, Dr. Brohn, and a fourth man—a little, round, blue-eyed German, and no doubt highly educated, since his ruddy face was terribly scarred by duels—came to the Legation, and there we met with Villalobar, Van Vollenhoven, and M. Francqui. The Baron von der Lancken made a little speech thanking us all for our pains, and especially Villalobar and M. Francqui for having undertaken their journey to London, and told us something of the opposition he himself had encountered in Brussels and in Berlin in reaching an understanding. I replied, thanking the Baron for all the skill and patience by which he had given proof of his interest, saying that I realized how very difficult it all had been, as indeed it had, thanking Villalobar and Francqui too, on behalf of Van Vollenhoven and of myself; and then, the amenities having been observed, we settled ourselves in our chairs to listen to the reading of the note in which the Governor-General set forth the new guarantees.

We listened while Dr. Reith read the note in French, waiting, with not a little nervous apprehension, for him to come to the fatal paragraph about the C.N. and the C.R.B., preparing for a battle on that point. Dr. Reith read on, drawing near to the paragraph, came to it at last, but there it was, all perfect, with the recognition duly set forth, all we could ask, and we were all greatly relieved. There were felicitations all round, and—the *ravitaillement* of Belgium went on. A few days later we had the notes all duly signed, as I could telegraph to Dr. Page and to Mr. Hoover at London, so that they might have the satisfaction the good news would cause them.

XVI. VISITORS

THE suspense created by the uncertainty in the relations between America and Germany was accentuated by our lack of news. When the London newspapers arrived they were a week old, and when the American newspapers arrived they were a month old, and filled with sensations long since stale. The sheets that were printed in Brussels made no reference, or made very little reference, to the long sequel of events that were slowly drawing us into the maëlstrom of the war. We had the Dutch newspapers when the Germans permitted them to cross the border; for the most part we depended on the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, which would have a paragraph or two each day about the *duikboot oorlog*, on the development of which the fate of civilization seemed to be more or less depending. The Dutch language was omitted from my imperfect education, but by dint of puzzling over the broad columns of the *Rotterdamsche Courant* I came to have a vague and shadowy apprehension of its meaning when it dealt with subjects relating to the war, especially if those subjects were sensational enough, though I never was quite certain as to how the sensations had turned out in the end. I had, of course, official news from Washington from time to time, but what was lacking was the sense of the atmosphere of any given political situation, which only a thousand and one hints, personalities, references, incidents, bits of gossip, kindly or malicious—and especially the malicious—can provide. To be sure, there were the German newspapers, but one might as well have read nothing at all; to read them was to know as little about the war as the German people themselves.

Our conviction was that it would end by our leaving Brussels, for in the political conflict then going on in Berlin between the *civils* and the *militaires*, the *militaires*, if they were like the *militaires* in Brussels, would have the last word, and they were always for more and ever more war. We kept our trunks packed and were ready to go on the short notice we felt would be all that would be vouchsafed us, and if we were not precisely sitting on our boxes, we had the impermanent sensation of those in that cramped and benumbing posture.

We tried, however, to appear permanent. The subject was

never mentioned in my visits to the Politische Abteilung, which may have been because just at that time I did not go to the Politische Abteilung, for walking was then impossible. But the spring had come once more and I could drive out to look at it, through the Forêt to Overesyche or La Hulpe, the countryside all a tender green and the woods in soft colours. One cannot live in Belgium without wishing that one had been born a painter; the moist atmosphere blurs all sharp edges and rigid outlines with a halo as of radiant and delicate mist, and the cottages with their red tiles and old walls are all an indigenous part of the landscape in which they nestle. And yet it is a bad habit, I am sure, always to be looking at nature as the stuff for art, and at life itself as literature. Canvas and copy! One is never happy so!

When Easter came I had a dispatch giving the President's message, in its solemnity and its strength, conceived in that strain which was proper to the leader of the liberal thought of the world. The *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* that day said—in my clumsy reading of it, at least—that Count Bernstorff, after an interview with Mr. Lansing, did not seem to be so optimistic as he had been the day before. There was nothing to be done of course, so my wife and I drove out through Laeken to Mysse, where, behind its high walls, is the gloomy château of the Empress Charlotte, who lives on there in the perpetual shadow of the tragedy that ended the imperial Mexican adventure of half a century ago. We drove out that way often, and always, I fear, rather craned our necks in an indiscreet, if human curiosity, thinking to get a fugitive view of the former Empress. But we never saw her; we could see the façade of the château, the windows staring baldly and sometimes flashing back the sun, when there was a sun. We felt, or perhaps we only imagined, that the place wore the melancholy air of the life that had prolonged itself there, amidst the faded glories of a Court that always kept up its imperial pretence—though perhaps there was no more pretence than in other imperial Courts, which are all based on pretence, even where crowds of snobs and flunkeys sustain them by a gaping approval and truckling acquiescence. We wondered what news of the present dark tragedy of the world had found its way behind those bleak walls. I was brought into material contact with it when I was asked to arrange for the *ravitaillement* of the

château, which I did. But that was all; aside from that it ever remained a mystery that found an appropriate setting behind the foliage of the great trees in the park.

The sun was shining that Easter Day and the fields were sweet in their tender green or brown, with the new-ploughed earth that gave forth its goodly odours, and there were anemones in the grasses and great masses of the yellow flowers in the fields of rape, and here and there along the wayside old walls over which the boughs of peach-trees were falling. It was that ever lovely Belgian scene, with the windmills and the church spires in the distance, and the peasants winding slowly along a sunken road homeward from vespers. They came slowly and sadly because of the persistent sense of tragedy in the atmosphere, for the loathed uniform of field-grey and the crude red of the ugly little caps were never long out of their sight. . . .

The Germans had celebrated Good Friday by posting on all the walls of Brussels a great *affiche* in red announcing the latest condemnations for "treason in time of war," thirteen victims in all, four of them sentenced to death and the others to hard labour, some for life, some for fifteen years, some for ten years. Three of those condemned to death had already been shot; the sentence of the other had been commuted to imprisonment at hard labour for life.*

AVIS

Ont été condamnés par jugement des 11 et 12 avril 1916, du tribunal de campagne:

(*a*) *Pour trahison commise pendant l'état de guerre en pratiquant l'espionnage et en y prêtant aide,* à la peine de mort:

1. Oscar Hernalsteens, dessinateur à Bruxelles;
2. François Van Aerde, dessinateur industriel à Anvers;
3. Jules Mohr, inspecteur d'assurances à Valenciennes;
4. Emile Gressier, inspecteur des ponts et chaussées à St.-Amand.

(*b*) *Pour avoir prêté aide à l'espionnage:*

5. Georges Hernalsteens, serrurier à Bruxelles-Boitsfort, aux travaux forcés à perpétuité;
6. Gustave Desmul, ouvrier du chemin de fer à Gand, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
7. Albert Liénard, entrepreneur à Valenciennes, à 10 ans de travaux forcés;
8. Oscar Delnatte, directeur de cinématographe à Roubaix, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
9. Constant Pattyn, terrassier à Lille, à 12 ans de travaux forcés;
10. Jacques Drouillon, marchand de volaille à La Plaigne, à 10 ans de travaux forcés;
11. Lucien Cabuy, peintre à Bruxelles, à 15 ans de travaux forcés;
12. Joseph Vermeulen, propriétaire de briqueterie à Meirelbeke, près de Gand, à 10 ans de travaux forcés;

The day before the execution an échevin of the commune of Ixelles had been summoned to the prison of St.-Gilles, the high walls of which enclosed so many tragedies, to perform a marriage

13. Joseph Goosenaerts, professeur à Gand, à 10 ans de travaux forcés.

Alfred Gaudefroy, marchand de diamants à Bruxelles, a été acquitté.

Les condamnés à mort avaient consenti, moyennant payement, à pratiquer l'espionnage pour compte du service d'information de l'ennemi. Longtemps, conformément aux instructions qui leur avaient été remises, ils ont observé nos troupes, mouvements de troupes, transports par chemin de fer, autos, etc., et transmis ou fait transmettre les renseignements ainsi obtenus au service d'information de l'ennemi.

Les autres condamnés ont pratiqué l'espionnage ou y ont prêté aide de la même manière, mais dans une moindre mesure.

Les condamnés à mort Hernalsteens, Mohr et Gressier ont été exécutés.

En vertu du droit de grâce, la peine de mort prononcée contre Van Aerde a été commuée en travaux forcés à perpétuité.

BRUXELLES, *le* 19 *avril* 1916.

Translation

NOTICE

The following have been condemned by judgment of a court martial of April 11 and 12, 1916:

(*a*) *For treason committed during a state of war by practising espionage and by giving aid to its practice*, to the penalty of death:

1. Oscar Hernalsteens, draughtsman, of Brussels;
2. François Van Aerde, industrial draughtsman, of Antwerp;
3. Jules Mohr, insurance agent, of Valenciennes;
4. Emile Gressier, inspector of bridges and highways, of St.-Amand.

(*b*) *For having aided in espionage:*

5. Georges Hernalsteens, locksmith, of Brussels-Boitsfort, to hard labour for life;
6. Gustave Desmul, railroad workman, of Ghent, to 15 years at hard labour;
7. Albert Liénard, contractor, of Valenciennes, to 10 years at hard labour;
8. Oscar Delnatte, cinema director, of Roubaix, to 15 years at hard labour;
9. Constant Pattyn, navvy, of Lille, to 12 years at hard labour;
10. Jacques Drouillon, poulterer, of La Plaigne, to 10 years at hard labour;
11. Lucien Cabuy, painter, of Brussels, to 15 years at hard labour;
12. Joseph Vermeulen, proprietor of a brick-yard, of Meirelbeke, near Ghent, to 10 years at hard labour;
13. Joseph Goosenaerts, professor, of Ghent, to 10 years at hard labour.

Alfred Gaudefroy, diamond merchant, of Brussels, has been acquitted.

Those condemned to death had consented, in return for payment, to practise espionage for the benefit of the intelligence service of the enemy. For a long time, in conformity with the instructions that had been given them, they have observed our troops, the movement of troops, transports by railroad, automobiles, etc., and have transmitted or caused to be transmitted the information thus obtained to the intelligence service of the enemy.

The others condemned have practised espionage or have given it aid in the same manner, but in a less degree.

The men condemned to death, Hernalsteens, Mohr, and Gressier, have been executed.

By virtue of the right of pardon, the penalty of death pronounced against Van Aerde has been commuted to hard labour for life.

BRUSSELS, *April* 19, 1916.

ceremony. One of the condemned men wished before he died to wed his fiancée. The échevin had taken his books and paraphernalia and had gone to the prison where the bride was waiting. The ceremony was performed, and in the place of the usual felicitations the échevin could only say to the bridegroom :

" *Ayez du courage !* "

" *Je l'aurai !* " he replied.

He embraced his wife and kissed her, and she was led away. And the next morning at dawn she was a widow.

Tragedy was all about us, and sometimes touched us, or threatened to touch us, even more closely. Early in the month I had news of two arrests that gave me concern for a long while. One of them was that of Senator Halôt, a Belgian who had been honorary Consul in Brussels for Japan, and since Japanese interests had been committed to my charge, I tried to help him, even though the Germans long since had officially notified all Governments that they would not recognize honorary consuls. Senator Halôt was implicated in a movement to assist young Belgians to cross the frontier, and since, according to the German rule, patriotism on the part of a citizen of another nation is treason against Germany, and Senator Halôt was charged with this high crime and misdemeanour, and since the Politische Abteilung in informing me that nothing could be done referred to the case as " *cette malheureuse affaire,*" it was evident that it was very serious.

The other arrest was that of Dr. Telemachus Bull, an Englishman, who was also charged with treason for having aided Belgian youths to cross the border to Holland. Dr. Bull was a man of seventy, very tall, and he wore a long beard that was said to give him a resemblance to the late King Léopold II. He was a dentist by occupation, and had professionally served the King whom he was said to resemble. He had been arrested early in the month with a Belgian priest said to have been associated with him in his treasonable action against Germany, and I had at once made representations and engaged a lawyer to defend him.

There was, too, just at that time another incident, which involved the arrest not of one but of many persons—an entire young ladies' school, indeed. The girls had refused any longer to take music lessons of a German professor, and the gallant professor at once complaining, the *Polizei* descended on the

pensionnat, arrested all the girls and imprisoned them at St.-Gilles. I suppose that was some kind of treason too, but the young girls were not shot for it, and after a few days' confinement were released and allowed to return home to their distracted parents.

The signs of spring and of the mysterious awakening in nature were not confined to the woods and fields; they were evident in man as well. The Zeppelins, for one thing, were active again. Now and then they could be seen sailing over the city, like some great silvern fish swimming in the ethereal element. They would come out in the morning, as though for their exercise, hover hideously over the city for an hour, then go back to their lairs. Then one evening—it was the Tuesday after Easter, I think—they all left, and pointing their noses westward sailed away and disappeared. The next morning they were back, and two days later we read in the communiqué that they, or some Zeppelins, had flown over London and thrown their bombs in the city.

Another sign of the coming of spring was that the tables were all out again on the sidewalks before the *estaminets*, as they call the public-houses in Brussels, and those who were of that taste could once more sit in the open air and sip their beer or coffee and watch the passing show. It had been an old custom in Brussels, but when the Germans came the municipal authorities ordered all tables indoors to prevent disturbance and as in some sort an expression of the mourning Brussels had put on. The Germans, always sensitive to criticism, even when it was only implied, were not pleased, but the municipal authorities would not revoke their order, and the tables remained indoors until the Germans themselves ordered them out again, and instructed the proprietors of the *cabarets* to serve their patrons at them, and could thereafter point to them as an evidence of their assertion that Brussels was normal under German rule.

Indeed, one of the most exacerbating of all the little irritations that filled all the interstices of the larger pains and troubles of the time was the inconsidered and recklessly misleading statements that were published abroad in England and in America by those who made flying visits into Belgium, and then went away and wrote their impressions. Some of them, in what seemed like resentment at not finding the whole Belgian population fainting and dying of hunger in the streets, would say:

"But I thought the people were starving!"

I used to point to the wonderful organizations of the C.N. and the C.R.B. as the reasons why they were not, but even so they would go away and, as though they had been deceived, describe the state of affairs as normal. The display of the last poor remnants of a stock of tinned food in a shop window convinced them that there was no need of carrying on the *ravitaillement*, and to see people calmly coming and going in the streets instead of lifting their hands to heaven and crying out in anguish and despair was enough to cause them to conclude that the population did not feel the heel of the conqueror. I recall one man who came to Belgium in that April of 1916 accompanied by a German officer, who showed him such sights as he cared to have him see, and then went away to write a series of articles in which he said that since the Germans had " taken charge in Belgium " there had been a complete cessation of contagious diseases, and that they had done wonders in reducing infant mortality. The fact was that there were before the war no more contagious diseases in Belgium than elsewhere, and during the war they increased to an alarming extent. This was especially true of tuberculosis, as of other diseases due to malnutrition. At the very moment the man I have in mind was inspecting Brussels under the tutelage of his German guide, philosopher, and friend, meetings of physicians and city officials were being held in the Hôtel de Ville to devise methods of combating the spread of tuberculosis. The work among the babies that was shown to the peripatetic student was that of Les Petites Abeilles, to which I have already made reference—a work organized by Belgian women long years before the war, and under the auspices of the Comité National enlarged during the occupation. These errors were perhaps excusable, but what was beyond all imagining was the attitude assumed by some of these visitors toward the occupation, or toward the fact of the occupation itself. They either were insensible to its basic injustice or had the illusion that if things were not hopelessly evil under it, it was somehow justifiable. What few of them seemed to realize was that even though the country, since the Germans had " taken charge," were ruled with the united wisdom of a Moses, a Solon, and a Justinian, it could not be justified. They seemed to be lacking in that culture which would have enabled them to imagine and to sympathize with the bitterness and anguish of soul, the humiliation and degradation of spirit felt by a proud,

free, and sensitive people, compelled thus to live under the domination of an invading host.

XVII. SUMMER TIME

THE population was again suffering for the lack of potatoes, a staple article of diet among the poor. The supplies sent in from Holland were wholly insufficient, and the peasants, with bucolic stubbornness, still refused to declare their stocks; they hid them away, and when the soldiers went to hunt for them either remained silent in a wily pretence at ignorance or gave the soldiers to drink, and so much that they were soon incapable of recognizing potatoes even if they saw them. On Sundays crowds of the poor went into the country about Brussels and brought back clandestinely as many potatoes as they could conceal on their persons. The Germans were not long in learning of this, and thereafter late on Sunday afternoons the trams entering the town were stopped at Quatre-Bras and all the occupants searched. It was forbidden, for some inscrutable reason inherent in the mysterious organization of the Kartoffelzentrale, to transport potatoes from one commune to another, and as a natural consequence there was much smuggling; men skulked through the Forêt and the Bois in the night, bearing small bags of potatoes. One day at Tervueren a man stealing across the fields with a little supply was shot down dead by the soldiers in pursuit. Any day at Quatre-Bras German sentinels could be seen leading off groups of peasant-women who had potatoes hidden under their skirts and had been seized from the trams. Finally Villalobar and I suggested at the Politische Abteilung that an armistice be declared for a while in the hope that the peasants would consent to bring out their potatoes.

The almost universal discussion of potatoes, however, gave way on May Day to a new preoccupation; the Germans had posted an *affiche* commanding every one to adopt thenceforth summer time (*l'heure d'été*). The penalty for failure to comply with the order was a fine of three thousand marks and from six weeks' to six months' imprisonment. The Herr Professors had discovered that an extraordinary natural phenomenon occurs every summer—namely, that the sun rises earlier than in winter,

and therefore that if one will get up with the lark and go to bed with the chickens, one can thus contrive to get in a full day's work without burning gas or electricity, and the authorities seized this opportunity to lay down a new rule and invent a new crime. Thus one more complication was added to the slavery of existence. We had already had German time for a year and a half, and the Belgians had ignored it and stubbornly continued to lie down and rise up by Greenwich time, or *l'heure des alliés*, as they called it. German time was already an hour earlier than Belgian, and under the new rule it would be two hours earlier, and it was apparent that those who, like the Legations, had relations with both camps would have between the two little time left to doze in the morning and happily forget the madness of the world.

But I could never remember whether German time was earlier or later than Belgian time. Now I would start up frantically an hour earlier in order to keep an appointment with Von der Lancken, and on reaching the corner of the Rue Lambermont and the Rue Ducale find that no one but the boy scout had reported for duty; now I would loiter leisurely in the conviction that I had another hour before me, and when I got there find them all at luncheon. The prospect of two hours' difference was appalling. Besides this original and constitutional difficulty one had to remember in speaking to a German that *l'heure allemande* was intended, and in speaking to a Belgian to remember that *l'heure belge* was implied.

The Belgians had not the slightest intention of adopting *l'heure boche*, as they unfeelingly called it, but they found a *modus vivendi* when the news reached Brussels that the French Government had established *l'heure d'été* and advanced, or retarded—whichever it is—their clocks one hour. Thus ultimately there seemed to be but one hour's difference between their time and German time, for they had been tardy by a year and more in yielding to the horological reform. The Belgian Government at Havre would no doubt follow the French example; hence, in Brussels the patriotic adopted *l'heure du Havre*. Then we were where we were before. It was dark at eight o'clock by the sun, but that was nine o'clock by Belgian time, and ten o'clock according to the Teutonic Joshua.

The German order was enforced on the communal authorities,

of course, and suddenly a surprising irregularity on the part of all the public clocks in Brussels was to be noted. Many of them developed the most startling eccentricities; they ran fast or ran slow, indifferently gained or lost time, seemed indeed to have abandoned all moral principle and to have lost their senses quite. From the most staid, reliable, and reputable clocks in the world, with the regular exemplary habits of an honest bourgeois, they became all at once light and frivolous in conduct, dissipated and wasted time, were no more to be depended on, and, when the Germans passed, almost put their hands up to their noses in the most mocking of *pieds de nez.*

The clock on the Hôtel de Ville, however, with a somewhat sorrowful mien, marked the hour according to the German principle or the German prejudice, whichever it was, and Villalobar adopted a method of designating the time that could offend no one; he referred to *l'heure de l'Hôtel de Ville*: the Germans could not object because it was their time, and the Belgians could not object because it was their clock.

And Brussels wit had its usual revenge. Up from the lower town, recalling the old French proverb to the effect that it is useless to look for noon at fourteen o'clock, came the latest *zwanze*:

"*Les Allemands ont trouvé midi à quatorze heures.*"

But even the mockery of Brussels could not divert us long from the anxiety caused by the tension in the relations between Germany and America; it was that which was on every one's heart and on every one's tongue. The Belgians, as ever, were torn between the desire to have America enter the war and the dread of the effect on the *ravitaillement* if she did so. And then one Saturday evening, April 29, Hermancito came up from the Rue des Colonies to tell us that Mr. Poland, who was then Director of the C.R.B., accompanied by all the delegates for the north of France, had left for Charleville, where the Grand Quartier Général was pitched. Mr. Gerard, our Ambassador at Berlin, had gone down there for an audience of the Kaiser at which the submarine question was to be discussed. Mr. Poland had left on a summons by telegraph and the Germans had put a special train at his disposal; he and the C.R.B. men were to arrive there at six o'clock and dine with the Ambassador and the officers of the General Staff.

We awaited anxiously Mr. Poland's return in the hope of some news of the situation. He came back two days later; Mr. Gerard had had his audience of the Kaiser and was still hopeful, but the situation was very grave. So we knew little more than before.

However, Mr. Poland told us of an incident that was not without its interest and importance. The men of the C.R.B. had dined with the General Staff; Mr. Gerard was present, and the higher officers were evidently anxious to please and to impress the Ambassador.

"You see," said General Z——, with a liberal gesture to the men at the table, "the *ravitaillement* goes on splendidly; in fact everything goes on well, as Mr. Poland will tell you—*nicht wahr*, Mr. Poland?"

And he deferred to the Director of the C.R.B. for confirmation and affirmation.

"Well," said Mr. Poland, who was not an ambassador and felt no need of Talleyrand's adage to guide him in his utterance, "the *ravitaillement* goes on, yes. But things are not going on well at Lille; what you are doing there is not right—in fact it is horrible."

"Why, what is that?" demanded the General

"You are deporting women and young girls."

It was like a bomb in the middle of the board which the General Staff would have so harmonious, and when General Z—— recovered from his shock he said that he had not known of such goings on, demanded information of his officers, threatened to break some one—in short, would take severe German measures.

I tell the story as I had it from the men of the C.R.B. The General, all the Generals in fact, were not pleased that their impression on the American Ambassador had been thus so rudely compromised. What they did about it I do not know; the deportations at Lille were not wholly stopped, at any rate, though I believe General Z—— said that they would be.

Mr. Poland's *boutade*, which did such credit to his feelings as a man, was wholly justified by the fact, if not by the occasion. The Germans had instituted at Lille the abominable practice of impressing women for labour in the fields. The military authorities had ordered them to be seized, and thousands of them, many of them girls, were torn away from their homes without

any notice, huddled indiscriminately together in trains and sent away in the charge of common soldiers to work in the harvest-fields. Many a Frenchman in Lille, his day's work done, returned to his home to find his wife or daughter gone, he knew not whither and had no way of knowing, or when or whether she would ever come back again.

I was told that fifty thousand were ordered to be thus seized, and while I cannot say that the figure is accurate, it is a fact that thousands were thus taken from their homes and set to labour like so many female slaves in the fields that summer, and doomed to what other dark fate one may easily imagine. . . .

Strange, the contrasts in this complex life, even life so sad as we knew it in Brussels! How such horrors could exist on the earth and people speak lightly of common things! That very evening, while those girls and young wives of Lille were enduring such anguish of heart as no means can portray, I was sitting in a conservatory after dinner, in the home of a friend.

Then, in the light, inconsequential drift of conversation, some one mentioned denicotinized cigarettes, detestable things, of German invention, or more likely adaptation. And an old gentleman, turning toward a beautiful woman whose round arm, its golden bracelet far above the elbow gleaming through the thin tissue of her gown, hung over the back of her chair, said:

"Il faut un peu d'alcool dans le vin, un peu de nicotine dans le tabac, un peu de caféine dans le café, et un peu de coquetterie dans la femme."

The pretty woman removed her arm from the back of the chair, delicately raised her cigarette to her lips, and said:

"Et dans l'homme un peu de rosserie."

Of what antitheses is life composed! One might have expected, in the presence of that monstrous Lille injustice, an angry bolt from the skies to smite those Generals to the ground—unless, indeed, it smite us, who could hear of such horrors and a few moments later fall to talking lightly of other things.

XVIII. TOWARD WAR

We might have alleged in our own defence that we were not responsible, though when one ponders on the infinitely complex

and insoluble question of personal responsibility one is not so sure of one's defence. I suppose it is best not to be too self-righteous since we all have somewhere our share of the injustices that are done in this evil, evil world. We used to talk about the war most of the time, discuss the question of the responsibility for it; most every one laid it directly at the door of the German Emperor. At the Politische Abteilung, with his hand on his heart, a German officer said to me, as though he would finally, once and for all, dispose of the question:

"I assure you on my honour that we did not begin or desire this war; it was all the fault of England."

Again it would be the fault of Russia; and one man traced its origin to Louis Napoleon and his annexation of Savoy; while another, the most erudite of all, carried it back to 1453 and the beginning of modern history with the taking of Constantinople by Mohammed II.

I have spoken somewhere in these pages of the fact that during the war men and women did not act up to the cinematographic standard. We had to get what little distraction we could, and get it how we could, and there was little in poor Brussels in those times to distract it from its tragic preoccupation. Had we given way to our emotions we should not have lived and done our work, even as imperfectly as we did accomplish it. M. Francqui returned from one of his journeys outside and told us of a scene in the Belgian trenches somewhere along the Yser. A group of soldiers were playing at cards in their muddy trench; immediately behind, on the damp and desolate Flemish plain, was a new-made grave, its occupant, killed that very morning by a shell, just buried there. Some one asked whose grave it was.

"My comrade's. I play the ace!" said one of the men, and with a triumphant flourish flung down the winning card.

No one who knew war as we had come to know it could wish his country to go to war as long as there was an honourable way of avoiding it, and yet, much as I loathed war myself, I had come to realize that there was a peace far more loathsome, and that was a peace bought by acquiescence in a monstrous and hideous injustice. We were coming to realize what this modern Germany was, what ruin and havoc it would create in the world if it was allowed to go unhindered on its way. And the fact that in that process it would naturally destroy itself was not

sufficient reason for letting it destroy the structure that mankind had been so long in rearing. The feeling was deeper than that inspired by the atrocities; these things, though never on such a broad and scientifically organized scale, had been done before; Germany in her development in that respect seemed to be passing through the Stone Age. One could imagine some ultimate, sophisticated German, two centuries hence, sadly shaking his head and saying, "Oh yes, our forefathers did shocking things when our empire was being founded." But the great difficulty was that the ultimate German could never exist at this rate, because the principle upon which such character is based was not only wholly lacking, but derided and denied.

"Your democracy, your idea of liberty, bah!" said a German officer to me one day; and another remarked, with less emphasis:

"It doesn't suit us; we have another way of looking at things."

Precisely; and that way of looking at things deprived them of that moral discipline, that inner subjective restraint independent of all external sanctions, which deters men from doing certain evil things. That subtle sense which we define and recognize as honour, however imperfectly we may live up to it, seemed to be unknown to them. "There are things a fellow cannot do," says a character in one of Mr. Kipling's stories; it is a sentiment that Germans did not seem to understand; there was nothing a German fellow could not do provided he could say to himself that it was for the *Vaterland*, and provided, too, that he had the physical force to prevent others from interfering with his doing it. What was worse, he could prepare to do it by all sorts of pious hypocrisies so as to throw those whom it would injure off their guard, and afterward deny having done it at all. When he wished to invade Belgium he could say that French aviators had thrown bombs on Nuremberg; when he wished to sack and destroy Louvain he could say that the civilians had fired on him; when he wished to use asphyxiating gas he could say that the French were using it; when he wished to rescind the promise not to billet soldiers on the inhabitants, he could say that these promises would be annulled as a punishment for the population if spying did not cease, and then lodge his troops in the residences of Brussels. When he wished to divide and annex Belgium he could pretend to fly to the relief of the

persecuted Flemings; when he wished to restore slavery he could bewail the sad condition of the Belgian unemployed. The thing that vitiated the whole character of modern Germany and set at naught and cancelled all its other qualities was that subtle and implicit Lie—the lie of the dispatch of Ems, upon which the Empire was founded; the lie as to the alliance of Belgium with France or England; the lie of the *francs-tireurs*; the lie of the ninety philosophers about Louvain; the lie that was ever ready and available in any emergency. The lie was far worse than the gas, was indeed a noxious vapour in itself, which poisoned first of all those who invented it and stooped to its use.

The rise of the Prussian State over that old Germany, the blond, gentle, and dreamy German of idealism and humanitarianism celebrated by Madame de Staël so long ago, was predicted by Edgar Quinet, the French historian, in 1831, but the danger to civilization was not realized by France until 1871. It was not realized by England until 1914, and in 1916 America had not yet realized it. We in Belgium did not wholly realize it even then. And so we lived on in a fond and foolish hope, trying to work from day to day, always with that troubling sense of incertitude and impermanence; the only permanent thing seemed to be the German occupation. But we began packing up, as I have said, and waited for the exchange of the final notes and the beginning of the unlimited submarine war—for no one in his senses could believe that the Germans, having such weapons, would hesitate to use them. I began first by packing up my library, which foolishly I had dragged across the sea with me, but even in this I could make no progress because I stopped to read each book I started to pack, and at the end of the first day I had disposed of and packed three volumes. Then I turned the task over to one of Desamblancx's men.

That was early in May. The hatred of the Americans was growing so intense that even the common soldiers were affected by it; we began to note it in the sentinels, who performed their duties with that superserviceable and boundless zeal that is the product of the German soldier's gaping idolatry. When we drove in the country and patrols of Uhlans mounted on bicycles halted us, when they read my great G.G. *Passierschein* they glared at us terribly. But there was compensation in the welcome of the little children in every village through which we

passed, then and always. They danced and swung their caps and shouted "*Vive l'Amérique!*" or "*Amerika!*" if they happened to be Flemish. The children of Belgium know that word, and I know no more patriotic wish than that it may come to mean to every one, even Americans, what it meant to those little Flemish children in wooden shoes.

After dinner that evening Hermancito came with the German note which was in the Cologne newspapers of that day. Mr. Poland came, too, to hear the news, and after we had got through the usual spiteful references to England we found the note less warlike than we had expected, and possibly sufficient to prevent a rupture, though we were not sure of the little paragraph tucked in at the end, which was susceptible of an interpretation that would impose a condition binding America to induce England to lift her blockade. Much of it was evidently to the galleries—*aus dem Fenster zu sprechen*, as the Germans' own phrase has it. It did not settle our problem or allay our uncertainty, and I felt that Desamblancx's men might as well continue packing the books. Five days passed, then the President's note was printed, fine, clear, and strong, and two days later the Belgians, relieved at knowing that the Americans were not to leave, were congratulating me on the President's diplomatic victory, and even if they were convinced that the Germans one day would blow up another ship they took comfort in the respite, and I resumed the familiar task of trying to settle the latest difficulty in the *ravitaillement*.

It had arisen during that week of uncertainty when we were waiting to hear whether Germany would conduct her submarine war according to the rules of the game, or whether she proposed herself to change the rules while the game was in progress. The difficulty was this: The Governor-General, as I have said, had just given assurances that no more cattle and food-stuffs would be requisitioned. These assurances covered the Occupationgebiet, but we heard that by a German order fifteen communes toward the south had been detached from the Occupationgebiet and added to the Etappengebiet. The assurances did not run in the Etappengebiet; hence requisitions could be and were already being made in the fifteen communes just detached. It was, of course, no affair of ours how the Germans altered the boundaries of their Gebiets, but if they continued to alter them so as to

exempt territory from the application of the new guarantees it was plain that they might as well never have been given. We went, Villalobar and I, to see Baron von der Lancken about it, and he said that the boundaries between Gebiets were changed from time to time according to military exigencies, but we succeeded in securing recognition of the principle that once guarantees had been applied to territory in the Occupationgebiet they should remain in force and, as it were, run with the land, even when it was detached to be included in the Etappengebiet.

There were, however, many infractions of those later guarantees. It was not so simple a matter to enforce them as it was the others, either those relating to imported foods or to the indigenous crop. The imports were brought in by the C.R.B. and turned over to the C.N., which distributed them directly; they were always thus in our hands and subject to our control, and the indigenous crop, while in the control of the *Zentrale-Ernte-Kommission*, or Crop Commission, was distributed by the C.R.B. The others—that is, the latest guarantees—were pledges not to requisition cattle or food-stuffs, and over these cattle and food-stuffs, in the possession as they were of peasants, we had no possible effective control. Peasants were not above turning an honest penny by selling their eggs or their chickens or their pigs, and soldiers, proverbially prone to pilfer, would take those things where they found them. This was particularly the case just then. German officers told me that troops released from the inferno about Verdun and brought back for repose and recuperation into what was to them the paradise of Belgium would take anything fit to eat, and pigsties and hen-roosts suffered; there was no power, not even German discipline, that could control them. Doubtless their officers did not give themselves great pains to control them, but winked at what were to them such minor infractions. We secured a reiteration of the promises, and more stringent orders were issued, and then we encountered another difficulty—the old desire of the Germans to be admitted to the sessions of the C.N. and its sub-organs. Just whence this insistence came we could not be sure, but there it was, at any rate, working behind the mysterious scenes of the organization, pushing the old Governor-General on to an interference that would have been fatal to the work. The demand was the old one that a German officer should attend

all the meetings of the provincial committees. We had a conference—Villalobar, Francqui, and I—one May morning with the Baron von der Lancken and Dr. Brohn, and again explained to them the danger, the impossibility, of such a method. The Belgians would never consent to meet with a German officer at the head of the table; they would rather abandon the work and starve. I imagined the scene for them: the Belgian committeemen arriving and seating themselves around the table; then the Kreischef or his lieutenant coming in, in boots and spurs, with an enormous sabre at his side, a revolver in his belt, taking his seat at the head of the table, letting his fist fall on it—what kind of discussion could there be in such conditions? They smiled and actually saw the point. There was the old suspicion on their part of political manœuvres in the sessions, but, we asked, if the Belgians who formed those committees—and they were, of course, the leading men, the officials, the personalities of their respective communities—wished to discuss politics, did the Germans suppose that the presence of a German officer at their committee-meetings would prevent them from doing so at some other time or place? Did they imagine that it would not occur to them to discuss political questions elsewhere? The Baron von der Lancken and Dr. Brohn did not fail to see this themselves, and we finally agreed upon a formula according to which the Belgian president of the provincial committee would go to the German provincial president at stated intervals, or whenever desired, and give him whatever information concerning the functioning of the *ravitaillement* he wished. And to settle the question once and for all we asked—Villalobar and I—for an audience of the Governor-General himself.

It was one rainy Saturday morning—May 13—that the Marquis and I drove to the Ministry of Arts and Sciences in the Rue de la Loi to have our interview. The antechamber was thronged with German officers waiting for their turns at the source of favour and privilege and power in occupied Belgium. Juul, a grey little man with an unhealthy complexion, the head of the Brussels secret police, was there, and the Prince Hatzfeld, who directed the Red Cross which the Germans had taken over from the Belgians, and others, all bowing in the German military way as we entered. Von der Lancken came ere long, smart in his uniform and in elegant high

boots, springing up the grand staircase like a boy, fearing he was late.

The Governor-General received us in the grand *salon* where he held his receptions, and asked us to be seated at a table that stood between the windows. After a word or two he produced a manuscript and read to us in French what he had to say, making curious mistakes in pronunciation now and then. He sat there with the great enamel cross of the Black Eagle dangling at his wrinkled throat, and other crosses on his breast, while down below us, there in the Place before the Palais de la Nation, the troops were at guard-mount. It was noon. A military band was playing, some prodigious German voice was bellowing martial commands, and booted feet were striking the pavement in the goose-step; then more commands and the ring of the butts of muskets on the stones as they came to order arms. . . . Then it was still.

Greatly to our relief it was a mild address that the old Governor-General was reading to us: we had feared that he was going to impose very hard conditions, but nothing of the kind appeared; all he wished, he said, was that his authorities be kept informed as to what went on in the *ravitaillement*, and that there be no political discussion, and he left the task of finding a formula to Baron von der Lancken and to us. Finding the Governor-General in such a favourable mood, we asked that other functionaries be not allowed to interfere in the *ravitaillement*, but to centre the discussion of its problems in the Politische Abteilung, and he nodded appreciatively and agreed. We chatted for half an hour, the Governor-General appealing to Von der Lancken now and then when he sought a French word to express his meaning, and when the Baron whispered to me that some *haut personnage* was coming to luncheon we withdrew. The *haut personnage* was our former host of the château at Lille, the Crown Prince of Bavaria, but we did not see him, and came away with the satisfaction of knowing that the *ravitaillement* would still go on.

To be sure, there were always the potatoes to be worried about. The Governor-General, on our suggestion, had declared an armistice of a fortnight, saying to the peasants that if during that time they would declare their stocks they would not be punished for having concealed them, but all to no avail. The peasants were more wily and stubborn than ever, and saw in

this complaisance only a new and more subtle method to trick and outwit and despoil them.

XIX. DR. BULL

THERE was just then a season of Wagnerian opera at La Monnaie under official German patronage. Two years before, the *Ring* and all the other operas had been seen on the same stage—*Parsifal* a score of times—and all Brussels had been there; the town was enthusiastic; a medallion designed by De Vreese had been struck in commemoration. Now not a single Belgian would go near, and most of them would declare to you that they would never again consent to listen to so much as a leitmotiv of Wagner. They were thinking of another drama, far more representative of Germany as they had come to know it, just then playing out its tragic *dénouement* in the Senate chamber. These trials were secret, and for that reason the interest in them was all the more morbid and perverted; but one morning the news was whispered about that thirteen had been condemned to death, and many more to various penalties and forfeitures.

The accused were tried as spies, and it was alleged against them that they belonged to a large organization that furnished to the Allies information concerning the Zeppelins, the hangars where they were housed, and the movement of troops by rail—"counted trains," as the phrase was. The leader was said to be Charles Parenté, a telegraph lineman of Anderlicht, near Brussels, a patriot evidently of force and character. It was said that during his trial there in the Senate chamber, worn out and perhaps weary of the long session, he fell asleep in his chair. One of the judges, observing him, was indignant and had him roused, and then said:

"*Vous dormez, monsieur!*"

"*Oui,*" said Parenté calmly, "*il faut que j'aie la conscience bien tranquille pour pouvoir dormir quand j'ai déjà un pied dans la tombe.*"

They had no illusions as to the fate awaiting them, those obscure heroes of liberty in Belgium. Parenté and nine of his fellow-patriots were condemned to death, and nineteen others were condemned to hard labour in German prisons. And then immediately the stricken relatives and friends of the condemned

came to the Legation to implore me to intercede, and day and night their pitiable appeals lay on my heart. At the end of one of these hard days Villalobar was there, sitting on the other side of my table. He was weary and showed the strain; he, too, had been besieged by all those suppliants.

"My dear friend," he said, looking up at me, "don't you think it is very long?"

It was very long, and there seemed to be no sign of its end. There was so little that we could do. These were all Belgians: there was no official ground on which we could base pleas for mercy; it was a matter of the greatest delicacy even to approach the subject. But we did what we could; we made unofficial and informal representations, and a few days later we had the satisfaction of hearing that the Governor-General would commute some of the death sentences. He did commute seven of them to hard labour for life, but three of the condemned—Parenté, Lefèvre, and Krické—were shot by the firing-squad that was assembled at the coming of almost every dawn.*

This sort of thing was going on all the while, as though Alva's Blood Council were sitting again in Belgium. If every trial did

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AVIS

Par jugement du 8 mai, confirmé le 10 mai 1916, le tribunal de campagne a condamné à mort pour espionnage :

Charles Parenté, ouvrier du télégraphe à Anderlecht ;
Arthur Devaleriola, employé du télégraphe à Berchem-Ste.-Agathe ;
Louis Lefèvre, employé du télégraphe à La Louvière ;
Gérard Hubert, employé du télégraphe à Schaerbeek ;
Théodore Fisch, marchand de cigares à Malines ;
Prosper Krické, inspecteur d'assurances à Gand ;
Martin Bastiaensen, employé du télégraphe à Molenbeek ;
Jules Deblander, ouvrier du télégraphe à Nimy ;
Gustave Dallemagne, secrétaire des fortifications à Liége ;
Antoine Lechat, contremaître du télégraphe à Nimy.

Parenté, Lefèvre, et Krické ont été fusillés.

La peine de mort prononcée contre les autres condamnés à mort a été commuée en travaux forcés à perpétuité, en vertu du droit de grâce de Son Excellence le Gouverneur général.

Dix-neuf autres accusés ont été condamnés à de fortes peines de travaux forcés pour espionnage ou pour avoir prêté aide à l'ennemi.

Les personnes condamnées appartenaient à une grande organisation qui avait pour mission de se procurer des renseignements sur nos hangars à dirigeables, nos transports par chemin de fer et autres points d'ordre militaire et de transmettre ces renseignements à l'ennemi.

BRUXELLES, *le* 15 *mai* 1916.

[*For translation see opposite page.*]

not bring its tragedy it brought its injustice, and the very weather itself was in the mood of the times; cold and bitter rains were falling on the dull, drab city, the rains that come with *les saints de glace*, as the French call their cold days in the middle of May—*die drei strengen Herren* of the Germans. It was at that time that Brussels had another sensation in the arrest of one of her most prominent citizens, the venerable M. Armand Bloch, who for twenty-five years, by the unanimous choice of the Israelite communities, had been Grand Rabbi of Belgium. At Eastertime he had preached in the synagogue of Brussels; scattered through the congregation were about forty German soldiers, and the following day the Grand Rabbi was arrested, charged with having offended their patriotic sentiments.

Now it happened that the sermon the Grand Rabbi had read that morning had not been prepared for the occasion, but was, in fact, a sermon he had preached years before, in 1908; it had been published, and he read it from the printed copy. It did not contain, and by no possible means could have contained, any reference to the war, since it had been written six years before the war began, and had not been changed; and it made no

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Translation

NOTICE.

By judgment of May 8, confirmed May 10, 1916, the court martial has condemned to death for espionage:

Charles Parenté, telegraph workman, of Anderlecht;
Arthur Devaleriola, telegraph employé, of Berchem-Ste.-Agathe;
Louis Lefèvre, telegraph employé, of La Louvière;
Gérard Hubert, telegraph employé, of Schaerbeek;
Théodore Fisch, cigar merchant, of Malines;
Prosper Krické, insurance agent, of Ghent;
Martin Bastiaensen, telegraph employé, of Molenbeek;
Jules Deblander, telegraph workman, of Nimy;
Gustave Dallemagne, secretary of the fortifications, of Liége;
Antoine Lechat, telegraph foreman, of Nimy.

Parenté, Lefèvre, and Krické have been executed.

The death penalty pronounced against the others condemned to death has been commuted to hard labour for life, by virtue of the right of pardon of His Excellency the Governor-General.

Nineteen other accused have been condemned to severe penalties of hard labour for espionage or for having given aid to the enemy.

The persons condemned belong to a large organization which has for its object the procuring of information concerning our dirigible hangars, our railroad transports, and other things of a military nature, and to transmit this information to the enemy.

BRUSSELS, *May* 15, 1916.

allusion to the Germans. What the German soldiers present took umbrage at was the somewhat emphatic tone of certain texts read by the Grand Rabbi, texts which the Germans did not recognize as quoted denunciations of the old Hebrew prophets; they thought them original observations of the Grand Rabbi addressed directly to them and stigmatizing their deeds and those of their comrades. Perhaps common soldiers might be excused for having found the texts entirely apposite in their case and the boot so well fitting that they at once drew it on, but more discrimination might have been expected of the magistrate who presided at the trial. Rabbi Bloch submitted the printed copy of the sermon with the proof of its date, and expected that to establish his innocence, but, with characteristic lack of humour, the German magistrate failed to see in this any extenuating circumstance and condemned the Grand Rabbi to six months' imprisonment, and sent him forthwith to the prison of St.-Gilles, where, the gaol being already overcrowded, he was confined in a cell with two other prisoners.

The leading members of the community petitioned for his release, but to no avail; the German authorities were obdurate, and the Grand Rabbi remained in his cell at St.-Gilles for having cited a text of some Hebrew prophet that characterized in terms too explicit the deeds of modern Germans.

It was a few days later that the trial of Dr. Telemachus Bull was held. I had been very anxious as to his fate; in speaking of it the Germans had shaken their heads sadly and spoken of it as very grave, very grave, so that I was troubled about the possibilities. Dr. Bull was charged, of course, with treason, under the sinister clause of Article 90 of the German Penal Code and 58 of the German Military Penal Code, the penalty for which was death. And then—an aggravating circumstance—Dr. Bull was English. His offence consisted in having tried to send recruits across the Dutch frontier to the Belgian army. He had been betrayed by some of his accomplices. With nearly a score of other accused he was tried by a court martial at Antwerp on May 19, 1916. I had engaged the services of Maître A. Dorff, of the Brussels Bar, to defend him, and he appeared with Maîtres G. Vaes and E. van den Bosch, of the Antwerp Bar. The court also appointed the Herr Dr. Lappenberg to aid in the defence, and, as Dr. Bull was charged with a capital offence, Dr. Lappen-

berg was instructed to plead especially for him. There was, indeed, less haste and more respect for the form and substance of justice in this trial—the result, perhaps, of tardy reflection on the procedure in the case of Miss Cavell. The lawyers were allowed to examine the dossiers and to converse with their clients before the trial. And besides the lawyers themselves there was another innovation—the brother of one of the accused was allowed to attend the hearing.

The old doctor was very fine and dignified, and the influence of his strong personality affected the court. He stood up, faced his judges, and at once admitted having furnished two young Belgian medical students with the address of a person who he believed made a practice of clandestinely conducting young men to the frontier. He admitted also having given to the person in question a photograph of one of the students, which had been employed in making a false card of identity for the young Belgian. When the prosecutor asked him to give the name of the person to whom he had sent the two youths he refused to do so; he said that he wished himself to assume the entire responsibility for the deed.

And then, out of the throng of prisoners on trial, there arose a man in the black soutane of a priest, who bowed and said:

"I should like to thank Dr. Bull most heartily for his generous attitude, but I cannot let him assume alone the responsibility; it was I to whom he sent the students."

And Dr. Bull, bowing in his turn, said:

"I thank Monsieur l'Abbé, but I cannot consent to his making this sacrifice; I alone am responsible."

The priest was the Abbé de Vogel. He protested again, and the doctor protested; there was a veritable *duel d'élégance* between them.

The attitude of Dr. Bull produced a favourable impression on the court—won him, indeed, some sympathy; and this, together with another fact educed in evidence, worked a change in his favour. The two young medical students, who were among the accused, testified that they had had no intention to enlist as combatants in the Belgian army; one of them had intended to place himself at the disposition of the Red Cross, the other to finish his studies in a university in Holland, and then to enter the medical service of the Belgian army. On this the *auditeur*

militaire amended his information so as to charge Dr. Bull with having violated only Article 2 of the Governor-General's decree of July 11, 1915, punishing with imprisonment for not more than five years and a fine of not more than ten thousand marks those who aided the clandestine departure of Belgians between the ages of sixteen and forty years. On this charge, then, he asked that Dr. Bull be condemned to one year, and for having aided in preparing the false card of identity, to six months in prison. But the court was even more lenient; it condemned him to three months' imprisonment and to pay a fine of five thousand marks. This judgment was confirmed on May 23, 1916. Dr. Bull had been in prison since April 6, most of the time in solitary confinement, and to a man sixty-nine years of age this was in itself a hardship. The doctor insisted on this point and asked that the time he had already been in prison be included in his term of imprisonment, and this the court allowed.

The Abbé Vogel was condemned to twelve years' imprisonment at hard labour.

It was with a feeling of great relief that I heard of the result of the trial so far as Dr. Bull was concerned. According to German standards the punishment was light. There was, after all, some sense of justice in them! Arrangements were made to pay the doctor's fine, and with his British courage and fortitude he settled down to make the best of his confinement until that July day when he should be free.

XX. SOME NOBLE VISITORS

It had been stupid to be housed up as I had been for weeks, unable to walk and permitted only to go for a drive when the weather was fine. And the weather was not often fine; the rain fell dismally all the while—*le diable battait sa femme*, as the French say. I had been able to drive down to the old château of Seneffe one Sunday to see some friends, but that was the extent of my travels. Raymond Swing, the correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, had been in Brussels, and, like most newspaper men, could tell more news than he could print: the President's diplomacy had been a great victory, as the European Press, indeed, widely recognized, and he had at the same

time helped the Liberal element in Germany to a victory which seemed to give some hope to mankind; the fiery Von Tirpitz had been temporarily suppressed, and though the *Tubantia* had been torpedoed by the military party to avenge his downfall, the sinking of the *Sussex* had been a mistake, and the *Lusitania* itself would never have been torpedoed, they said, had not the Germans thought it impossible that she could sink so quickly. Mr. Swing had come to Brussels to interview the Governor-General for his newspaper, and the interview was a remarkable one; in it we learned many things that we seemed never before to have fully grasped.

"The work of the Germans in Belgium," said General von Bissing to Mr. Swing, "is not appreciated at its full value by the Belgians, whose mind—and that is comprehensible—is enveloped in a cloud of patriotic sentiment. You yourself will have seen that the ravages in Belgium have not the extent claimed by a part of the foreign Press. Many things laid to the charge of the Germans and to my charge personally are highly exaggerated or wholly inexact. I can say that I can sleep with my conscience in peace."

When Mr. Swing asked him if the attitude of the Belgian people toward the Germans had ameliorated, he replied:

"It has considerably improved. Naturally, the country must be held by a firm hand, and in some cases—as, for example, where it is a question of obeying—rigorous punishments are imposed. I am forced to sign sentences of death—a grave responsibility that I have always sincerely regretted. But we find ourselves engaged in a war conducted on the principle of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, and the implacable obligation having been imposed on me, I have signed without trembling or hesitation."

The Governor-General said, too, that the German civil functionaries had put in vigour a number of Belgian laws that had "remained in the drawers."

"This is particularly true," he said, "in regard to measures of social betterment [*prévoyance sociale*] in favour of the women and children of the working class. Compulsory education, which Belgium has known only in theory, has now become a reality. The Flemish people, for the first time, have been put on an equal footing before the law with the Walloons. We have accorded to

them without obstruction the use of their own language, and given them their own schools; the Flemish University will be erected at Ghent. To these measures of civil administration there have just been added numerous ordinances concerning public hygiene—a domain in which the Belgians have never particularly distinguished themselves."

The Governor-General, speaking of the financial condition of Belgium and of the annual war contribution of 480,000,000 francs, said that he felt great reforms had been wrought in the system of taxation.

"Everywhere," he explained, "we have introduced a direct tax on capital. It is probable that this will excite recrimination, but this new system will distribute for the first time in Belgium, and in an equitable way, the burden of public finances, and compel the rich to contribute their just part."

And then he went on to say:

"I have applied myself especially to create progress in agriculture, that element indispensable to the economic life of a country of which the industries are practically dead. You will observe that the fields of Belgium are well cultivated and flourishing. Vast herds of cattle graze in the pastures. I have always made it a rule to order requisitions only within those limits which could not endanger the future of Belgian live stock. To the same end measures have been taken to protect the breeding of horses, and in maintaining a number of stallions and brood mares sufficient for reproduction. The statistics for this year show an increase of 49 per cent. in live stock compared with that of last year.

"Such have been the grand lines of my policy; the maintenance of agricultural industry, execution of the social laws, equal rights for the Flemish and the Walloons, sound financial administration on the basis of equal taxation."

Thus Von Bissing, the reformer. The interview was published in French in *La Belgique*. We read it and rubbed our eyes, and then we smiled. We smiled most, I think, about the one statement in the interview that was worthy of any attention or explanation, and that was the assertion that the live stock in Belgium had increased 49 per cent. in a year. The "statistics" to which the Governor-General referred were based on the declarations of the peasants as to the amount of live stock they possessed.

In 1915, when the Germans ordered them to make their declarations, they supposed that any live stock they declared would be seized, and made their declarations accordingly. In 1916 forage was rationed, and owners of live stock were ordered to declare the live stock that they had to feed, and again they made their declarations accordingly. Naturally there was a great increase in the quantity; and the Governor-General was right in estimating it at 49 per cent.; the wonder is that the statistical increase was not more.

The Governor-General's opinion that the work of the Germans in Belgium was not appreciated by the Belgians seemed to be generally shared by the officers in his reform administration. With the coming of summer many Belgians were trying to secure permits to go away to Holland or to Switzerland. A young lady of our acquaintance went to the Pass-Zentrale in the Place Royale to apply for a *Passierschein* to go to Holland, and the officer in charge asked her if she could not arrange some tennis-sets for the young German officers; they found life so dull in Brussels! The spirited girl replied, "No! never!" told him frankly that Belgians would hate Germans so long as there was one Belgian and one German left in the world, and went away.

The women indeed were all splendid, and I might give many instances of their spirit. When German policemen were searching the house of Madame E—— at Brussels, seeking copper, they saw an old Turkish pistol lying on a table in the *fumoir*, where it was doing duty as an *objet d'art*.

"*Mais, madame, vous avez des armes chez vous?*"

"*Oui, mais ce n'est qu'un pistolet turc, et comme vous le savez très bien, une arme turque ne vaut rien.*"

Such stories were infinite in number and variety. There is not a châtelaine in Belgium or in the north of France who has not her adventure to relate; and she is apt to relate it with considerable feeling, born of her impotence to express the indignity of it all. It would be difficult to say whether the minor incidents that reveal a mere lack of taste are the more affecting, or those of a gross brutality. They range the whole gamut of impoliteness in the human species from that incident in which a German officer, having forced himself and his staff on a household for dinner, announced afterwards that when the war was over he would return and bring his wife, to the more exaggerated conduct

of the royal prince of whom de C. told me. At the beginning of the war he found himself with his sister in their château south of Mons. They had established a Red Cross Hospital and had been nursing wounded soldiers, British for the most part; for the British army was then fighting in that region. Indeed, on August 24 General Sir John French stopped at the château. The next afternoon C. and his sister, after a fatiguing day, had seated themselves for a cup of tea and a moment's rest, when glancing out of the window C. saw a group of German officers approaching. They proved to be General von Kluck and his staff on their way, they said, to Paris. Von Kluck was correct, so C. told me, grave, reserved, and silent. But about the same time they had another guest, of much more exalted rank, no less a personage indeed than the Duke of S.-H., who had with him his nephew S.-M. They entered, clicking their heels, and with their hands held at the salute bowed again and again in the stiff German way, announced their names, and asked for a cup of tea. The Duke at first showed a determination to be exceedingly pleasant; there was a certain loud affability in his manner, but seating himself at the tea-table he leaned across to C.'s sister, and said:

"You know that you Belgians have treated us very badly. We came to you as friends, and see what you did."

C.'s sister resented this, but without bringing on any difficulties at that moment. There were several wounded English soldiers in the house, and these the Germans wished to see. A German doctor roughly pulled the bandages off the legs of one of the men to see if he really was wounded, saying that they were all probably shamming. And the Duke taking the knife of one of the soldiers held it close to his face—the lad was half dead with double pneumonia—and said:

"You use these knives to kill German prisoners."

The imputation of dishonour roused the boy to protest, and indeed seemed to imbue him with some life, for he recovered from that moment.

While the Duke was searching the château for hidden English soldiers, concealed arms, and what not, S.-M. approached C.'s sister and asked her if she would not come to dinner with them that night—at her own table. She said that, of course, she would not.

"You are our enemies; you have invaded our land. We did not invite you here, we do not want you here, and you should understand that I cannot, with propriety, take a seat at table with you."

Young S.-M. understood, and was indeed sympathetic, but when his uncle heard of the refusal he marched into the hall and began upbraiding C. and his sister, creating a scene, and making a spectacle of himself.

"You have poisoned the food!" he cried, quite beside himself with rage. "You have poisoned the food!"

Young S.-M. suffered from the vicarious shame of it, and taking de C. aside, implored him to do something to placate his uncle. De C. said then:

"Inasmuch as you charge us with having poisoned the food I shall go to table and taste it before you." And so he did.

The Germans had expected to spend the night at the château, but suddenly, without explanation, at nine o'clock they left and moved on to a country house not far away that had been abandoned by its occupants. It was a beautiful old mansion, full of artistic treasures, and a day or so after, when the Duke and his Germans had gone, C., visiting the house, found *objets d'art* destroyed, tapestries and paintings ruined, and the bedchambers the scene of unspeakable bestial indecencies.

They did not all behave that badly. It was not long thereafter that the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz came along and was quartered in the château. He apologized for what he said was an intrusion he was powerless to avoid, acting as he was under a soldier's orders. He visited the British wounded, sat by their bedsides, talked to them in excellent English, kindly and sympathetically.*

The German officers were arrogant enough in Brussels, but the capital was spared many of the indignities that they visited upon the provinces. In the smaller towns civilians were required to salute German officers by raising their hats, and in some places in the Etappengebiet and in the Operationsgebiet the men not only had to lift their hats, but men and women both had to step off the sidewalks when the officers passed.

While in some cases indecencies were committed in the

* The Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz committed suicide in the spring of 1918.

châteaux occupied by the officers, as, for instance, in the King's Summer Palace at Laeken, and, of course, often by the soldiers, there were officers who thought to show their good breeding by leaving their cards when they left, to thank the owner for what they seemed to consider as hospitality. Sometimes they did more. A friend of mine had a château that was seized and occupied by German officers. At Christmas-time they had themselves photographed by flashlight as they sat at dinner in his house, drinking his wine. Then they wrote a letter presenting their compliments and thanks, telling him how much they had enjoyed themselves in his charming home, and enclosing one of the photographs. My friend was at a loss what to do. The letter was evidently a sincere effort to be polite, and he wrote back, thanking the officers and saying that he hoped that ere long he might have the pleasure of returning the visit in their own country, and in the same manner.

The one thing that affected the Germans, the one thing they respected, was force, power in some form, military power first of all, but power, whether of wealth, station, or rank, a name, a position, perhaps even a frock coat—for they were tremendous snobs. They were much impressed by Villalobar's servants when they had on their royal liveries and powdered wigs; I used to wish that he would have them dressed that way always, and go about with us.

They displayed all the familiar phenomena of the new rich. I can see a certain Baron at luncheon in a diplomat's house; the scars of his student duels were so disposed on his face that they gave it a worried and anxious expression. He went about turning up the plates to look on the bottoms, peering here and there in all the corners at the relics of centuries of culture, and asking where the like could be found.

The German officers indeed were always going to the Rue de l'Empereur to the antiquarians, and the Belgians shamelessly traded on their ignorance, sold them all the false and spurious pieces they had, and before long were manufacturing more to take their places. Le Jeune, the barber, sold as old engravings, and for a large sum, some prints on the wall of his barber-shop.

It was not hard for a pretty girl to obtain a *Passierschein*; for men, even men of advanced years, it was difficult. A friend of mine was anxious to go to Switzerland; he applied for a pass,

giving his reasons for wishing to go, and stating his willingness to deposit any sum as a guarantee of his return. The application was returned as refused; the refusal was in the form of a printed card with the blanks filled in, and with the one polite word in it crossed out. The words and figures written in are in italics, thus:

> Ihrem Gesuch vom *10.2* um Reiserlaubnis nach *der Schweiz* Kann leider keine Folge gegeben werden
>
> Pass-Zentrale, Brüssel
> v. MARX
> Rittmeister

The word *leider*, printed in the blank form, was crossed out with the stroke of a pen.

These things are trivial, to be sure, but in their aggregate they were great enough to produce their indelible impression and to furnish their evidence of what Brussels folk were never weary of discussing as *la mentalité allemande*, the phrase used in despair when they wished to account for some such attitude as that of the German officer who stepped out of the Astoria Hotel one evening, looked up into the serene, clear sky, in the profound depths of which a lovely moon was rising, and remarked to an American journalist:

"Ah! Fine night for the Zeppelins!"

Whatever it was, it led some of them to do shameful things, as when, finding Brussels too dull, they installed women for their pleasure in the homes of refinement which they had taken over in the city.

The atmosphere of the city under their occupancy during those spring days was more and more suffocating; there seemed to be no grace, no beauty, no dignity left in life. And yet there was the inspiration of the hope and endurance of the Belgians, a never-ending marvel. They were already planning for the reconstruction of the ruined villages scattered all over the land. At one time, as I have already said, the Germans themselves had proposed to undertake this task; they had even proposed to have German architects plan the reconstruction, which would have been a calamity even worse than the invasion. To imagine the lovely

Belgian scene, with its low nestling cots of the red roofs, its churches in the Flemish Gothic, marred by the intrusion of those baroque structures that are found all over Germany, was to prefer that the ruins be left as they were. But this idea was happily abandoned, and the Belgians were already studying the question in the spirit of the town-planning movement.

A committee was formed and prizes offered to the competition of architects, who were asked to submit drawings for the restoration of villages and of farms that had been destroyed. The work was to be a restoration as far as that was possible; when there was nothing left to restore the construction was to be undertaken in the spirit of what had been. In the case of reconstructed farmhouses the style for ages in use in that province was to be preserved and followed; modern improvements were to be in the interior, not on the exterior, and thus Brabant and Liége and the two Flanders were to be to the eye, and to the artist's eye, what they had been in happier days.

In May the committees held an exposition of the plans submitted, in the new Hôtel de Ville of the commune of Schaerbeek, and Villalobar and I went to open it. The Hôtel de Ville of Schaerbeek, itself a beautiful structure in the style of the old Hôtel de Ville that had been burned, was barely finished when the war began. It stands at the end of the vista of the Rue Royale at the opposite end from the church of Ste.-Marie. The communal pride is such that each commune, even in the agglomeration of Brussels, must have its *maison communale*. Ixelles adapted for the purpose the lovely old residence of Malibran, whose tomb is in the church at Laeken, and St.-Gilles has a new Hôtel de Ville which I had formally visited at about that time, to be received in State by the Burgomaster and the échevins; the Burgomaster read an address, and two little girls in white recited some verses, and my wife and I signed the Golden Book, and we went through the stately halls and looked at the paintings by Brussels artists with which the walls are adorned.

There was something inspiring as well as instructive about the exposition of the town-planning committee, something hopeful, too, the first sign of construction after so much destruction.

One of the promoters of the movement was Émile Vinck, a Socialist Senator, and when I felicitated him he told me of an experience that showed that the appreciation of the æsthetic

value of the movement was not altogether unanimous even in Belgium. He had gone a few days before, with the other members of his committee, to a certain village, and as they were standing with the Burgomaster looking down the main street of the town, its houses in ruins on both sides, the Burgomaster, pointing dramatically, said:

"*Ah, messieurs, pour vous montrer que nous sommes à la hauteur du progrès ici, je vais vous dire que toutes les maisons dans cette rue auront chacune un étage de plus—au moins!*"

Mr. Hoover was in Brussels for a few days; he had come to discuss with M. Francqui certain of those misunderstandings that would arise now and then as to the details of the work which the two great organizations were carrying on. Dr. Lucas, too, had just come to study child-welfare conditions, to be able to report intelligently on his return to America, where a campaign was to be undertaken for the Belgian children; and M. Francqui gave a dinner to the officials of the C.R.B. at that long table in his English dining-room, where from time to time the men of the C.R.B. met all the distinguished personalities of Brussels. I look back upon those occasions with the greatest pleasure, for M. Francqui was a good host, and the talk was always of the best.

XXI. LUNCHEONS AND DINNERS

THE position of the diplomats at Brussels, as I have frequently indicated, was wholly anomalous, and continued to be so to the end. Most of our colleagues were at Le Havre, near the Belgian Government, and the Germans, especially those of the military clique, frequently wished us all there.

"What are you doing here?" asked a German officer one day of Villalobar, in blunt intimation of a feeling that we were all *de trop*.

The Marquis measured him with his haughtiest glance from head to foot, and said:

"And what are *you* doing here?"

During the occupation the Austrian Legation at Brussels was occupied by the Baron von und zu Franckenstein, designated as *Commissaire auprès du Gouvernement d'Occupation*, and Turkey, too, had a *commissaire*, so I heard, though I never saw him. Among the

neutrals, Mahmoud Khan, the Persian Minister, was still in Brussels, as were M. Albert Blancas, the Argentine Minister; the Count d'Ansembourg, Chargé d'Affaires for the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg; M. J. Lemoyne, the Bolivian Chargé d'Affaires; M. Cavalcanti, the Brazilian Chargé d'Affaires; M. Sven Poussette, the Swedish Chargé d'Affaires; M. Portellas, the Cuban Chargé d'Affaires; M. Mitilineu, the Rumanian Chargé d'Affaires; and M. Jules Borel, the Swiss Consul-General and diplomatic agent. Bulle, though serving in the C.R.B., still had the Mexican escutcheon on his house, and on occasions flew the Mexican flag; but his diplomatic work went no farther.

Ouang Yung Pao, the Chinese Minister, lived on quietly in his pretty little Legation in the Boulevard Militaire. The Dutch Legation was under the direction of M. van Vollenhoven, as Chargé d'Affaires, and was very busy, as there were many thousand Dutch subjects in Brussels. There was the Papal Nunciature, and there were the Spanish and the American Legations. And that was all that was left of the corps that had been so large, so representative. The other neutrals, as though discouraged, as well they might be, with the state of things in the mad world, had withdrawn their envoys and closed up their Legations. The protocol had fallen into general disuse; we remembered, all of us, or tried to remember, to leave cards on one another on the various national fête-days, and we met occasionally, but never as a diplomatic corps, unless it was one morning when we all went to have our photograph taken in a rather sorry group.

And now it was June; the Nuncio was going away, and we were sorry to have him go. I had come to have great respect for Monseigneur Tacci; he was so fine, so distinguished, so intellectual. He was a modest man who in the most delicate of positions had rendered in the discretest way possible many little personal services during those trying times. He seldom went out of the Nunciature that stood darkly in the Chaussée de Wavre, but the door bell was always clamouring tragically, and night after night he was trying to save the life of some condemned person whose friends could appeal to him in his sacerdotal if not in his diplomatic capacity. Now that he was to go, there was no one left to take the initiative in showing him the courtesies due his rank as the only ambassador at the Belgian Court and

dean of the corps. But Cardinal Mercier came to the rescue and gave a luncheon in the archiepiscopal palace at Malines. It seemed something of an adventure, for no one could be sure just how the Germans would view it, none of them, of course, being included in the invitations. Villalobar and I drove up in the clear, sharp air and brilliant sun of the perfect day that ushered in that month of June, and just as we were going into Malines we saw M. Becqo, the Governor of Brabant, Baron Capelle and Count Leo d'Ursel, both of the Belgian Foreign Office, who had gone all the way on foot in the dust of the highway, far otherwise than it had been the wont of Belgian officials to travel in the days when Belgium was not under the rude heel of modern *Kultur*.

The walls of the plain, severely ecclesiastical building were riddled by the balls that had spattered there in those August days nearly two years before, but in the courtyard there was a pretty garden in bloom, and from the entrance we went up the long staircase and into a reception hall, large, light, but plain, severe, monastic, like the building itself and the life of its occupant. There were old portraits of former cardinals about the walls, and a new painting, just finished, of the present Primate of Belgium. The Cardinal's secretary received us, and there were standing about the room six or seven priests in black cassocks, wearing the magenta-coloured *ceintures* of Monseigneurs. Almost immediately His Eminence came in, tall, vigorous, splendidly alive and alert, the little red *calotte* on his head, a long cape of red silk floating from his broad shoulders and falling to the heels of his buckled shoes. He came forward with that long, eager stride, a smile hovering about the humorous mouth and clear blue eyes of the ascetic yet strong visage, reaching out both hands in welcome. He was a distinguished presence, his personality filling all the palace, very natural, simple, sincere, warm, and generous of impulse, putting every one at ease.

He looked somewhat older, and his hair seemed somewhat greyer than when I had seen him last, though that may have been of my own imagining, for despite a recent arduous journey to Rome, and an illness while there, he was hale and strong. I had not seen him for months; the journey to Rome had been fatiguing at best, and for him, in the circumstances of war, what with the everlasting question of *Passierscheins*, the reluctance

of the Germans to have him go, his heroic struggle with Von Bissing, and the extreme delicacy of his position, it had been doubly so. He had endured much, and had before him in that dark and unknown future much still to endure. The Germans were always tempted to arrest him, and the German newspapers insulted him continually with coarse caricatures, but nothing ever daunted this splendid patriot and real shepherd of his people.

The Nuncio arrived that day accompanied by his *auditeur*, and he in his violet and the Cardinal in his flaming scarlet made a picture better than any Vibert ever painted, though since Vibert could not paint very well that is not saying all that I should like to say about the impression I had of the two prelates.

We went out to luncheon in the large, barren refectory, its high ceiling broken, leaving a great, ragged hole gaping over our heads, showing the new rafters that had been put in to restore the roof. The barren windows were broken too—all tokens of *Kultur* in the autumn of 1914—and the Cardinal waved his hand carelessly and eloquently at all the wreckage, and said that he would have to apologize for the state of his house, but—and he laughed—he was not responsible, and it was the best he had to offer his guests.

He had his seat, according to the Belgian custom, in the middle of the table, with the Nuncio as his *vis-à-vis*, and Villalobar and me on his right and left respectively. He said grace in Latin, and there were responses in Latin, and twenty of us sat down to a simple luncheon, waited on by two old serving-men in black.

His Eminence talked much to me throughout the meal; he was full of appreciation for all that America had done for his land and his people, and was cherishing a hope of going there after the war personally to thank the nation. Mr. Hoover had called on him, as had many of the delegates of the C.R.B.; he was deeply impressed, he said, by Mr. Hoover's force of character, and had formed an excellent opinion of the American delegates. He told me, too, much of interest concerning the visit he had just made to Rome. . . .

When the meal was over the Cardinal rose and made a graceful and touching little speech about the Nuncio, expressing his sorrow at having him go, but felicitating him also, and paying

a tribute to the services the Nuncio had rendered Belgium. He spoke in the most flattering terms, too, of Villalobar and of me, and then went on to say that the Nuncio had been called to a new post in the Vatican, as major-domo of the household, and in his humorous way recalled the saying that if the major-domo of the Pope's household, who is always in the presence of the Pope, cannot become a Cardinal, nobody can. The Nuncio replied in a pretty speech which gained a charm from the fact that he speaks French with a trace of Italian accent. Then we all rose, the Cardinal returned thanks in Latin, there were responses in Latin, and we went back to the great reception-room.

In speaking of the Nuncio's new post His Eminence had divulged a secret; we knew, or some of us knew, that he was leaving, but he had not told us where he was going, and as we stood about with our coffee and cigarettes we could congratulate the Nuncio all the more because of his prospects for the red hat.

We went at once after the Nuncio had taken his leave, and the last glimpse I had of the Cardinal was of the tall figure in scarlet standing in the little entry-way to the reception-hall, a young priest who was there that day from Holland falling suddenly to his knees before him, and in an access of fervent emotion kissing the Cardinal's ring. And Villalobar and I raced back to Brussels, Jan, the Marquis's beautiful shepherd-dog, twisting nervously on his seat beside the chauffeur; there were bright, new, red tiles on some of the roofs of Eppeghem, and at Trois-Fontaines there was the black-and-red flag showing through the green foliage with its reminder, its tragic connotations of the state of things in the world.

It was only a few evenings after that Villalobar gave a formal dinner in honour of the Governor-General and of the Baroness von Bissing. The question of social relations with the Germans had been of an exquisite delicacy; accredited as we were to the Belgian Government on the one hand, yet neutrals at peace with Germany on the other, and compelled, if we would aid the Belgians, to be in constant touch with the Germans, we had long been uncomfortable on the horns of a social dilemma. The Belgians were in mourning; they participated in no formal social functions, but a recognition of the mourning was in the nature of an offence to the Germans, who were not in mourning, but finding the war

fresh and joyous, *der fröhliche Krieg*. There was no reason known to them why they should not dine out if any one would ask them, and we heard now and then of complaints on the part of some of them that the Belgians were not hospitable, were not willing to forgive and forget, to let bygones be bygones. During my absence on leave in America the Governor-General had given a formal dinner at Trois-Fontaines, the Baroness had come from Germany to preside at the table, and the neutral diplomats had been of the company. Now the Baroness was back in Brussels, and for that, and for other sufficient reasons, the Marquis had decided to give a dinner in their honour.

I used to tell Villalobar that if, instead of a Don and a Spanish grandee, it had been his fate to be born in America, and poor, compelled to make his own living and his own way in the world, he might have been anything he chose, lawyer, journalist, politician, artist, financier, so many and so varied were his talents, but that with his exquisite taste and his eye for effect and sense of the dramatic he would have made as great a stage-manager as Irving or David Belasco.

"Life is a comedy and we are all actors," he said. "How does your Shakespeare put it?"

His house in the Rue d'Archimède was a charming proof of his discreet and perfect taste. It expressed, as a house should, and as, in some instances unfortunately, all houses do, the personality of its occupant. It was filled with the spoils of all his travels, the souvenirs of his services at many posts, London, Paris, Washington, Lisbon. There were gifts from kings and presidents and rulers and prime ministers and artists in all these capitals; there were old Spanish paintings and cabinets filled with *objets d'art* and family heirlooms. There hung in the air a subtle perfume; there was a finished and ultimate effect in everything. The room in which he worked was always in perfect order; not a paper was out of place on the table where he toiled indefatigably until the small hours of the night; each of its numerous and curious little silver boxes at its post, his seals set out at his hand, every detail noticed by his penetrating eye. The æsthetic effect of it used to fill me with envy. Sitting there chatting with him I would think of my own desk with loathing and despair. But then, to begin with, thought I to myself one day, I never had a chance to get such a desk.

"Where did you find that table?" I suddenly asked him, looking at its delicate legs, its lovely lines; it was pure Louis XVI.

"In Toledo," he said, "in a second-hand shop."

"Ah," I replied, "one must rummage about in these old European cities——"

He checked me.

"Oh, it wasn't in *my* Toledo, in Spain," he said; "it was in your Toledo, in Ohio. That time I was there, you remember, for the carnival; I was going down that street—what's its name? . . ."

Having decided to do a thing he would, of course, do it well, and for the first time since the war began we were in full evening dress that night, and the festal effect of unwonted white waistcoats. All his footmen were in their royal scarlet liveries, with knee breeches and powdered wigs, and Olivo, the man who had been for so many years attached to his service, in black with satin breeches, quietly directing them in their tasks. The Germans had put on all their decorations; the Governor-General had a row of them across his breast. The Baroness was a slight, frail little woman, with a mild, somehow appealing face, very intelligent, speaking English in preference to French, for her mother, or perhaps her grandmother, was English. Besides her and my wife, whom Villalobar had asked to preside, there were only two other women, a Spanish marquise with snowy hair and great dark eyes, who lived in a country house in Belgium, and Madame Mitilineu, the wife of the Rumanian Chargé. Von der Lancken was there, and a good-looking young *aide* of Von Bissing's, and Harrach, and Von Marx of the Pass-Zentrale, and a German prince whose name I forgot—a studious-looking person with a black beard—and Poussette, the Swedish Chargé, and Caro, secretary of the Spanish Legation, and Villalobar's military attaché.

As we sat down to dine the Governor-General said:

"We are to be congratulated to-night on our great victory"

The *affiche* of the day had claimed a glorious triumph for the German navy in the North Sea, in the battle off Dogger Bank, and the Germans that evening were all in high feather and very proud and happy, though I do not remember that any one congratulated them, unless they congratulated each other.

Brussels had been very much downcast over the report of

the victory; and for two days I had been tormented by the failure of my efforts to secure permission for Mr. Alexander J. Hemphill, the New York banker and honorary treasurer of the C.R.B., to enter Belgium. He was waiting at the frontier, and Mr. Hoover, who was to meet him and come on with him, had not arrived, detained, as we learned a day or so later when they were at last admitted, by the naval engagements that made the North Sea for the moment difficult to cross.

Von Bissing and Von der Lancken were going to Berlin for Pentecost, but the Governor-General told me that evening after dinner that on his return he would give still more stringent orders to remedy the ever-recurrent evil of the seizure of food by German soldiers, and he explained that it was difficult to prevent the soldiers from pilfering, especially when they came back from the front to rest in Belgium; they found the chickens and pigs irresistible.

Having given one dinner, Villalobar promptly gave another, two evenings later, this time in honour of the Cardinal. The Nuncio was there, and Burgomaster Lemonnier, and M. Francqui, and the Baron Lambert, and the Baron Janssens, and the Count de Mérode, the Grand Maréchal, and numbers of other gentlemen in the *ravitaillement*, and the table was done in white and yellow, the colours of the Holy See. Villalobar wore his latest decoration, the Grand Cordon of the Order of Léopold, which the King of the Belgians had bestowed upon him on the occasion of his recent visit to La Panne.

After dinner that evening we were having coffee and cigarettes in one of the *salons*, the one where was hung the new portrait that the Baroness Lambert had just painted of the Marquis. M. Francqui and I were standing apart, and I was leaning against the old sedan chair that had belonged to Villalobar's grandmother. M. Francqui was in his humorous mood that evening. He examined the sedan chair an instant, and then said to me:

"*Est-ce que vous pouvez vous imaginer qu'un de vos ancêtres est allé dans 'un machin' comme ça?*"

Before I could reply he went on:

"*Je le puis, moi; seulement*"—and he paused and stepped around and took his place between the *brancards*—"*le mien était ici.*"

XXII. COMMERCE AND CORRUPTION

WITHIN two days the town had fully reassured itself as to the result of the naval battle in the North Sea, and clearly discerned in it a great victory for the British. The more the Germans boasted the more were the Belgians convinced that they had sustained a defeat; they proceeded on the assumption that the Germans never by any chance told the truth about anything. The news that Mr. Hoover brought was not so entirely reassuring, and while the Germans had the undoubted advantage there is in being the first to claim the victory, the naval battle remained for us, as it will remain perhaps for historians fifty years hence, a subject for discussion, if not of dispute. On its very heels, however, came the report of the loss of the *Hampshire*, and of the tragic end of Lord Kitchener, and that event had the effect of depressing all spirits. It is much easier for the human imagination, which after all is a very weak and impotent thing, to envisage a single, personal, individual accident than a large and general calamity. In the case of Kitchener there was something almost personal in the sense of loss that every one felt, because his fine figure, worthy of the best English traditions, had so long held its romantic place in the public mind, and his sudden death, announced by the Germans in their *affiches* without one generous word of appreciation of his life or his character, without one tribute to a brave and chivalrous foeman who had fallen with his armour on, came to us as a calamity that for a moment brought something like despair.

But there was work, that best of all antidotes to depression, to be done, and I could count myself fortunate that there had just come to Belgium a friend in whose society I was to find the sympathy and comradeship of a countryman whom I could be proud of and grateful for every day during the long hard months remaining before me in Belgium. That friend was Vernon Kellogg. He had been in Belgium as one of the officials of the Commission for Relief for a few weeks during the preceding autumn, and then had been called home by his duties as professor of biology in Leland Stanford University. But now he had returned, having left his classes and his lectures, sacrificing the book he was writing and all his personal interests, to assume the

post of Director of the Commission. He came at the moment when his varied and various talents were needed most. Not only did this university professor, this student of biology, distinguished for his scholarly attainments and the services he had rendered to science, manage the details of a vast enterprise that distributed ten million dollars' worth of food every month, but, by his tact, his discretion, his fine and noble spirit, and his simple, honest manner, the charm of which was expressed in his winning smile, he maintained a harmonious equilibrium in all the complex relations of the work. Others in that work were sometimes criticized when they were not present; Mr. Hoover was, M. Francqui was, Villalobar was, and more than any I am sure, and with more reason than any, I was, but no one ever had any but kindly words for Vernon Kellogg, and the character that was his is an honour not only to himself and to his country, at whose service he placed an intelligent patriotism, but to the university system of America, among whose élite he was so conspicuous. Dr. Barrows, Dr. Angell, Dr. Lucas, the Oxford students, and many others who came and went, gave the proof of its practical value; they were the exemplars of its high ideals, and in their work one could behold, almost in the very making, a standard and a tradition that should make one feel reassured as to the future of the Republic which in the trying ordeal of this gigantic and appalling war came to have a new meaning, and to inspire a deeper and more tender love. As though it were nothing at all, these men, unused to the counting-house and the market, turned their hands to the management of a vast and complicated business, one of the biggest, in the mere volume of its transactions alone, in the world of our day, and in its objects the most sacred of all.

Vernon Kellogg was the product of that university system, and he had continued his studies afterward in German schools. He knew German, therefore, as he knew French, perhaps better than he knew French, and he could talk to the Germans in their own tongue, which was of a great advantage to him and to the work. He had an innate sense of diplomacy; he was on good terms with everybody, and, what is more interesting, whether in the museum of the Solvay Institute, where I took him to see the skeletons of the score of Iguanodontidæ and the Ichthyosauria, and other animals of the epoch toward which the world was so

enthusiastically reverting, or in the *salon*, or in a council of the Powers that were in Brussels, he was at home. He came, as I have said, at a critical time, and he remained throughout all the storms we were to weather until the climax came in that greater storm which swept us into the war itself, and even then he turned back from England to help us to the very end. His services in the feeding not only of Belgium but of the north of France, I should say especially in the north of France, were of a nature incalculable. He actually saved the situation in France. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that the work there would have broken down and the people have been left to starve had it not been for his devotion and his perseverance and his tact, and yet he did it all so quietly and so modestly that he never had half the credit he deserved.*

Of course he did not care for credit; it was not that for which he was working and sacrificing himself and his career. He and the other men of the C.R.B. had in themselves their sufficient reward. When Professor Kellogg came we were in despair as to the continued and persistent seizures of the indigenous foods which the German soldiers persisted in making in despite, sometimes we were forced to believe in very defiance, of the assurances on that score which by such pains and efforts we had secured from the Governor-General. Von Bissing himself had explained to me that it was difficult to restrain the appetites of the soldiers when they came back from the trenches and doubtless that was true, especially since the officers in immediate command over them did not care whether they were restrained or not. The Governor-General had promised me, after Villalobar's dinner that night, to put a stop to this, and he did issue more stringent orders, even going so far as to threaten, no doubt as the heaviest punishment he could think of, to send to the front all officers who permitted these seizures.

But we were learning; it was not altogether the fault of those soldiers, half crazed by the inferno of Verdun, nor of their complaisant officers. There was, back in the labyrinth of the German

* Mr. Kellogg's little volume, "Headquarters Nights" (*The Atlantic Monthly* Press, Boston), is the best book that I know dealing with the conditions in Northern France and the mentality that directed the hideous and atrocious deeds committed there and in Belgium. In the few pages of this remarkable book, which for sheer literary style alone is fascinating, Mr. Kellogg has compressed all the agony of those times.

organization, farther back behind even the military clique itself, a system, dark, mysterious, sinister, well *camouflé*, working silently and remorselessly through the Zentralen.

Up to that time, I may as well confess, I had never understood the Zentralen. I do not fully understand them now, but I know more about them than I did, enough to feel, at any rate, that they were infinitely more pernicious than the worst of our trusts as viewed by the popular eye, and without any of their practical features. I had supposed at first that the Zentrale was simply another expression of what has been so widely extolled in the English-speaking world as German efficiency and genius for organization, but as time went on I learned more about them. Apparently a mere adaptation of the German theory of mechanical distribution of product—militarism, socialism, and plutocracy working hand in hand—they were in reality limited companies to which the Government of Occupation granted monopolies. That is, the Butterzentrale had a monopoly of butter, the Kartoffelzentrale had a monopoly of potatoes, when it could get any, and so on as to all sorts of products. The Zentralen multiplied; there was a Zentrale for everything, in the end even one for jam. These Zentralen, each with its monopoly, had behind them in every case decrees of the Governor-General forbidding all trading by others in the article in question. In some quarters it was said that half the profits they made went to the German army, in other quarters it was asserted that they went elsewhere. I know nothing as to the fact, only I used to suspect that if muckraking had not gone out of style, occupied Belgium might have afforded a good ground for adventure of this sort. It used to be one of our most cherished superstitions, a part indeed of our very stock in trade, in the old days of municipal reform in America, that German cities were ideally governed. I had accepted all that was written about them and never had any doubts, until, myself making certain studies in Germany, I was told at the Rathaus in Dresden, when I innocently inquired what salary the mayor was paid, that my question was indiscreet. I found some police scandals in Berlin of the familiar kind, and in another city some peculation, but I assured myself that these incidents must be exceptional, and, determined to be orthodox in reform, went on believing as before. But if there is any analogy between the methods employed in German cities and

those that I observed on the part of certain Geheimraths in Belgium, I think they might much better be muckraked than our own. I suppose now that German methods impressed us because they were foreign and mysterious, and we knew so little about them. Any machine in an American city will gladly govern the city, and govern it with more or less efficiency, on the same terms. We do not always put our best foot forward. The slightest irregularity, the least mistake, is published from the house-tops and cried abroad. Sometimes, during those dark days in Belgium, reading the newspapers from home when they were a month old and their current interest had evaporated, I would frequently derive the impression that the welkin was always ringing with denunciations of some one, and the atmosphere darkened by the flying missiles of the universal and recriminatory accusation, charge, and indictment that are always going on. No doubt it all has its effect as a police measure and proves us to be a very virtuous people, searching out with a remorseless and implacable conscience the sins of our neighbours. There was none of this in German cities, and there was none, and could be none, in occupied Belgium, and so the Zentralen had pretty much their own way.

The managers of any given Zentrale, holding as they did the monopoly, would buy the products of the producers, and, to justify its existence, would lay aside from 5 to 20 per cent. of it for Belgian consumption. The local brokers, sometimes renegade Belgians, sometimes Germans who came into the country to profit by the situation, would buy that product from the Zentrale, but it was openly said that in order to obtain a stock of any commodity it was necessary to bribe certain employés of the Zentrale. The brokers were always willing to pay large commissions—a thousand marks for a stock of sugar was said not to be unusual. The brokers could easily afford to pay this because, having a monopoly, they could extract from the consumers, who were among the easier class in Belgium, what prices they pleased, and I was told that brokers and the corrupt officials of the Zentralen in this way built up considerable fortunes. Certain of the Boerenbunds, the Catholic co-operative societies organized generally in the rural districts in competition with the co-operatives of the Socialists, were not able to obtain coal, though they made application again and again at the

Kohlenzentrale, because they would not offer bribes or commissions.

The German army was victualled through the central office at Brussels known as the Proviant Amt, and the Zentralen worked in close harmony with it, as did the brokers who were always to be found in the cafés around the Bourse. It was not only the brokers who profited, but certain tradesmen too. There were, for instance, butchers' assistants who set up for themselves, and though they did not sell one pig a week bought fifty on market day. It was not a violent assumption to conclude that the forty-nine pigs went to the Proviant Amt, and so to the German army. The Proviant Amt, too, could exercise a great influence on the price, simply by instructing its agents to cease buying; the price, of course, would go down, and then the brokers would obtain corners on the products thus affected, whether pork or sugar or coffee, beans or peas. Snug fortunes were undoubtedly made in sugar and in coffee as in the clandestine manufacture of soap; so that a man who got rich during the war came to be called "Baron Zeep"—a soap baron. The brokers who met, early in the morning and late in the afternoon, not in the Bourse, but on the kerbstone near the Bourse, were for the most part professional speculators, men who had followed the race-tracks, habitués of the pari mutuel, and the like. There were among them, too, professional thieves and waiters in cafés, and the profits they made went the way such profits generally go, in jewels or to women. These brokers bought not only of the Zentralen, but they bought for a while from stocks that had been hidden away in the early days of the war, and later from stocks of food that were made up either from small quantities smuggled across the frontier from Holland, or from bits of food purchased from the communal shops, or even, in some instances, the rations of the poor, as, for instance, rice. There was for a time in operation what almost amounted to a system for the purchase of rice. The Belgians had not generally eaten rice before the war; they did not like it; and when the C.R.B. imported it and the C.N. distributed it, they sold their minute rations to agents who went about the country and small towns. And thus patiently the agents collected, as one might say, a grain at a time, and made up stocks which they sold to the brokers. They would have the stocks smuggled into Brussels, sold more or less clandestinely on

the kerb, and the broker would send a cart to their hiding-place at night and fetch them.

German soldiers aided in the smuggling that went on at the frontier, as it goes on at all frontiers. There were certain inns and out-of-the-way cabarets where the smugglers and the soldiers and the renegades of all sorts met in comradeship, with the cigars or other luxuries that had been brought through the electric wires by the connivance of the soldiers, and there divided the spoils. Soldiers, too, used to go to the farms with large baskets and try to buy eggs or chickens, and the peasants were afraid to send them away empty-handed. There was an additional incentive to smuggling in the fact that it was forbidden by the Germans to transport food from one commune to another; it was always going on, with Brussels or Antwerp as the goal and final market. Women and young girls from the Quartier des Marolliens used to go out into the country and slip back into town at night with baskets of various farm produce—butter, potatoes, or flour. They passed the soldiers on sentry duty by giving them a few marks, and sometimes, as the gossips said, the sentries exacted a payment of a nature more indelicate and indiscreet.

With the German army seizing so many horses Belgium was for a long time a paradise for horse traders, who, with the versatile adaptability that seems to distinguish the horse trader everywhere in the world, profited by the situation. For a long time they worked in conjunction with certain German officers said to be susceptible to bribes, and when a farmer's horse had been seized or requisitioned by the Germans the traders went to console the proprietor by selling him another.

It is not a pretty story, and its incidents were made possible by the complexity and intricacy of the German system that strangled all trades and commerce, and by the evil inherent in the times. Not all the Germans, by any means, nor all the German soldiers, were corrupt; sentinels, as I have shown, were constantly stalking smugglers in the Forêt de Soignes, stopping the trams at Quatre-Bras, searching the women for potatoes and various products, herding them off to prison, now and then shooting down dead in his tracks a wildly fleeing carrier of contraband.

The young men of the C.R.B. could tell the story in more enlightening detail than I can, for they were in daily contact

with its unfolding. They came to have a greater understanding of German methods too, and they must have expressed it in their gay, youthful way in the song they composed in that affectionate fun they were always having with Hermancito, the chorus of which ran :

When Bulle is the King of Mexico,
We'll all have good positions
And live on requisitions,
When Bulle is the King of Mexico.

XXIII. SAVING THE GOLF LINKS

It was, therefore, not alone with pilfering soldiers that the work of the *ravitaillement* had to contend, it was with an army of brokers, speculators, smugglers, knaves of all sorts who were trafficking in the misery and suffering of the land. We did our best, but we could not overcome with any means at our command the wily efforts of such a band; even old Von Bissing, strive how he would, could not thwart them. On our constant and reiterated complaints, they were arrested and punished by the Germans; they were arrested and prosecuted by the Belgian courts; they were pursued by the Department of Inspection and Control of the Commission, under the direction of Mr. Joseph C. Green; but it was like contending with the rising tide of the sea. For such dark, subterranean systems of corruption there is no cure anywhere but the illuminating influence of publicity, and with conditions as they were in Belgium it was impossible to let in the purifying, antiseptic light. We struggled in despair, but we could never obtain, so far as the native foods were concerned, the results we were so proud of in the case of the imported food products. The loss in these was a small fraction of 1 per cent.; no business anywhere could show such a result, no Government could conduct its custom-houses with such a near approach to perfection. That was due, of course, to the fact that the imported foods were always in the hands of the C.R.B. or the C.N. until they went into the Belgian stomachs, but we despaired of ever producing such ideal results with the native products. which we never touched and could not control.

Again and again we made representations as to the abuses to be attributed to the Zentralen; there were in the German

administration those who did not hesitate privately to recognize their evil, and in the limited circles where such things were known they became a scandal, but nothing was done, and under the Zivilverwaltung new Zentralen were constantly organized. There was always the occult power, some real authority stronger than the apparent authority, some hidden spring of government, which we could not reach, much less dislodge.

That month of June brought a series of incidents varying in their importance from a discreet and tentative effort, quite unsuccessful, to secure the release of Professor Pirenne and Professor Frédéricq, to an attempt, almost equally ineffectual, to protect the property of the Bell Telephone Company at Antwerp. It was in charge of Mr. Clayton, and the Germans had seized much of it, giving their written engagement to pay its appraised value; they paid a portion of the sum, and then whenever Mr. Clayton tried to secure payment of the rest the German in charge of that business lashed himself into a fury, and fumed, and spluttered, and delivered a long harangue about Americans selling munitions to the Allies. Fond as they were of war, as devoted to it on principle, and as sure of the benefits it confers on the race, they seemed to prefer, as a condition for its exercise, an opponent without arms. One of the C.R.B. delegates for the north of France, who were always subjected to personal indignities, told me that a German officer struck an English officer, just made prisoner, across the face with his sword, and when the subject was discussed at the officers' mess that evening the Germans pressed the American to approve them when they insisted that the German officer had conducted himself as a gentleman.

A Belgian of my acquaintance was one day summoned by a German officer to one of the departments in Brussels and subjected to a painful and humiliating scene; the German, in an unrestrained passion, abused him throughout a whole hour for a mistake for which, as the German well knew, another, and not he, was responsible. The Belgian gentleman endured it all in silence, and when the German's rage had worn itself out, said calmly:

"You are not generous, sir; I am a prisoner here; I must endure much that I would not endure in other circumstances."

It was in that month of June that soldiers under command of an officer of the Tervueren garrison entered the golf club at Ravenstein. They marched in one morning, and, perhaps imagin-

ing that the bunkers were trenches, began some sort of a drill in them. I spoke of the matter at the Politische Abteilung, and orders were issued forbidding the soldiers to enter there. A week later German troops, under command of an officer, entered again, and drove mules all over the putting-greens. I appealed again, and the orders were repeated. Not long afterward the soldiers were again on the course, under the command of an officer, making charges over the greens and practising raids in the bunkers. I went once more to the Politische Abteilung, carefully explained that a golf course was the result of long years of seeding, of planting, of constant care, that the work of years could be destroyed in an hour. There were in the environs of Brussels, besides the vast plains where the Belgian armies had been drilled and manœuvred, many fields that could be used for drilling, and I asked once more that the golf club be protected; I produced an effect, however, only when I was fortunate enough to remember the deeds of the Suffragettes on the golf links of England, and as the Germans did not like the comparison this had its impression. In the end, through the comprehension of Count von Moltke, who was acting in Baron von der Lancken's absence, I was fortunate in securing explicit orders that thereafter prevented a repetition of the offence, and one of the most beautiful golf courses on the Continent, a gift of Léopold II, was spared.

They did not spare much, to be sure; they were just then taking a census of the fish in the fish-ponds of Belgium, in itself another complication because fish were, by analogy, covered by the food guaranties. Again, we were especially concerned just then about the babies; it was partly in their interest that Mr. Hoover, following Dr. Lucas's visit, had just come again into Belgium. There was a difficulty about milk; the C.N. had long maintained a model farm which provided milk for undernourished babies; the herds had been imported from Holland, but this had long since been unequal to the demand, which was constantly increasing with the spread of misery. The Countess John d'Oultremont was carrying on almost unaided an excellent charity; with the Germans' permission she would assemble hundreds of children and take them to Holland and there give them a fortnight's outing at Scheveningen-by-the-Sea. But charity under the best conditions can never keep pace with poverty in the world, even when the world is normal, and poverty

in Belgium, and all its accompanying evils, was increasing beyond the power of all efforts made to resist its ravages. Mr. Hoover succeeded in a measure in increasing the supply of milk, and just before he went away after that visit he told me with tears in his eyes that the peasants in Liége had said that since it was the Americans who asked it they would give their cows.

Miss Larner about this time was called home to her duties in the Department of State at Washington, and her going made the work in the Legation harder. She had been in the Legation for nearly two years; she had competently filled the post of a second secretary, and we all regretted her departure. I had had no Secretary of Legation since Gibson went away, and now I had to attend personally to all the details of the Legation work. Villalobar had gone on another journey to Madrid, and the Baron Lambert, deeply affected and concerned by the sudden news that the Baroness had fallen ill in Paris, was able to obtain a *laissez-passer* and to go to Paris. War gives a new meaning to partings and adds to the loneliness of those who remain behind. Belgium, as I think I have made clear, was like a prison in its atmosphere; love it how we would, and loath as we were all of us to leave, we nevertheless looked with envy on those who went away because to us it seemed that all on the other side of the line must be brighter than on our side; our friends there, as we supposed, knew more of events, they had news and information, much to encourage them, and above all they breathed the atmosphere of liberty. Slowly and reluctantly we were beginning to adjust ourselves to the idea of a long war; for a long while we would indulge ourselves in the illusion that it would soon end; we would fix a date, generously in the future, saying this winter will be the last, it will end in the spring; in the spring we would say it will end in the autumn, it cannot last another winter; for tasks are lighter and difficulties easier to bear when there is a definite term fixed for them. But we had been often deceived, and difficult as it is for human beings in this world to learn from experience, we were beginning to admit that it was impossible to see, to foretell, the end.

The Belgians were somewhat encouraged by the reports of the Russian advance that summer, and when the Germans would not permit the Dutch newspapers to enter they were more than ever persuaded that it was "serious"; but in Belgium nothing

changed; the dull, almost hopeless existence dragged on as before. There were the usual court martials and condemnations and shootings. Yet the Bruxellois were persistently hopeful; one of them, when I asked him one day what the news was, remarked, with a twinkle in his eye that showed his humorous appreciation of the amiable optimism of the town:

"*Oh, les nouvelles sont tellement bonnes qu'on n'ose pas en parler!*"

It was curious to note how deeply all the Germans were impregnated with the spirit of hatred; even the individual soldiers seemed to be affected by it; they were generally morose and melancholy, they smiled seldom, but strode along with sullen or sad expressions, and at sight of the little flag on my motor scowled, and now and then, if they were in companies, even jeered. I was seldom, indeed almost never, personally made to feel this hatred by those with whom I had dealings; there was always the correctness of the diplomatic attitude; but it made the daily task more difficult to know that the feeling was nevertheless there, and that Americans were rapidly succeeding the English as the objects of German animosity, and the latest subject of the German prayer: "*Gott strafe Amerika.*" . . .

One Sunday I had gone to the country for the day, and while there two Belgians came to see me. They were dressed in their Sunday blacks, and they revealed their mission with formal phrases, and with many apologies for disturbing me in my selfish outing, and yet they were in an agony of distress which all their careful manners and all their formal phrases would not conceal. Poor souls! I felt a great pity for them. It was for their brother that they came; he was at that moment under sentence of death. The case was that of Hervé Ameels, condemned for *trahison de guerre*, and a more desperate case could not be imagined. The young man had been in Holland and safe, and he came to the frontier to try by some means to send word to a friend in Belgium. At the frontier he spoke with a German sentinel who seemed friendly; the German, learning from Ameels his desire, told him to go into his booth and telephone. Ameels stepped across the frontier, and there, on Belgian soil, was at once arrested by the sentinel and sent to Antwerp. On his person the Germans found documents, the plan of an aviation field at Ghent, some statistics as to troops, and the names of two conspirators at Ghent.

The supreme folly of Ameels made his fate no easier for his friends to bear, and they came in numbers to implore my aid. And while I did, of course, ask mercy for him, it was, of course, refused and the sentence executed.

These were not the only tragedies. I have the memory of a sweet-faced Englishwoman, married long before the war to a German who, at the time of the romance, was prospering in business in England. They had a home in the country and were getting on well. The husband was an officer in the reserves in the German army, and when the war came on he was ordered to Belgium, and took his wife and children with him. It was not long before the husband neglected his wife, began to hate her; he said, because she was English. The children, two little boys, were placed in one of the German schools which the Germans opened in Belgium, and there they were tortured by the German boys, who taunted them with their English birth. Then the husband abandoned his wife, and she had but one hope, one desire, and that was to regain her lost England with her boys and have them reared as English. I tried to obtain permission for her to return to England, but failed in that, too, as in so much else in those times so sadly out of joint. The Germans would not permit her to leave Belgium because she was English, and the English would not permit her to enter England because she was German. . . . Day after day she came to the Legation, and the two boys leaned against her knees while the tears kept ever welling to her eyes. . . .

XXIV. THE QUEEN'S HOSPITAL

As I cast my memory back over that cold and rainy summer of 1916 it seems to have been relatively calm and uneventful for a summer in Belgium under German occupation, and yet in looking over my notes I find repeated references to "Naturalized Germans," "Engrais," "The Queen's Ambulance," "La Banque Nationale," etc., incidents which at the moment incited in us their various emotions of indignation or despair. I do not know why those days should have left an impression of comparative peace; perhaps it was because the sun had deserted us in June and left us to the monotony of that constant rain which in the

picturesque speech of Brussels is known as *la drache nationale*; perhaps it was because I was recovering from the lameness that had kept me practically immobile for so long. And then there is the mysterious and gracious process of forgiving Time itself, which kindly and considerately obliterates in memory the ugly and the painful, and leaves an impression from which the scars and blotches are all erased, and accounts for the charm that pertains to all that can be classed as auld lang syne. There was, too, what I can never forget, the kindness of my Belgian friends, the memory of whose gracious hospitality shall be one of the consolations to the end of my days. There are recollections of pleasant hours in the old château of Baron Janssen at Wolvendael, and in the homes of those dearest of friends, the Josse Allards, de Sinçay, the de Beughems, and others; they need the jottings in no journal to recall them to mind.

And yet, glancing over the entries for almost any day, I am reminded of much that would like to be recorded; and as I write I have the uncomfortable sensation that this record is growing much too long. For instance, turning to the first day of that month of July I find, in addition to the usual problems that each day brought, jottings such as, "the Russians have made another advance"; "*le Rotterdamsche*"—which meant the Rotterdam newspapers—"did not come in to-day"—always a sign of good news for the Allies; "fifty persons arrested and taken to St.-Gilles"—which portended new cases of *trahison de guerre*, more women's tears, more futile *démarches* at the Politische Abteilung; and "no peas to be sold after to-day," etc.

These were rather commonplace and typical entries; there are others which as I read them now seem incredible; I could scarce believe them had I not written them down at the time. For instance, the affair of the naturalized Germans; that of itself is a little chapter in the history of those times that would test the credence of any one reared under Anglo-Saxon institutions. I found it, or the problem it raised, awaiting me when I returned to the Legation in the afternoon of that first day of July, after a drive to Ravenstein where my wife and I liked to have our tea on the lawn when the weather was fine, or, when it was not fine, in the dining-room of the château, the window of which gave on to a little garden where the flowers bloomed gaily, just as though there were no war anywhere.

A memorial addressed to the Governor-General, signed by all the personages in the capital, protesting against the incorporation in the German army of young men who, born in Belgium of German parents, had opted for Belgian nationality, had been left at the Legation with the request that I present it to the German authorities.

There is an almost inexhaustible interest in the contemplation of the power of phrases, which are facts as solid as any, and out of their relation or in the wrong place become irritating foreign bodies like sand in machinery, or pebbles in shoes. I was referred to in the official correspondence with the Germans over the *ravitaillement* as Protecting Minister—*Ministre protecteur*—which I was, as far as the *ravitaillement* was concerned. But the phrase got abroad and amplified itself, as phrases will, and, in that confusion as to the powers and duties of diplomatic officials that exists everywhere and causes even editors to use the words Ambassador, Minister, Consul, interchangeably, it transpired in time that I was the *Ministre protecteur*, not only of the *ravitaillement*, but of Belgium, and of every one in it.

One morning I had a caller in the person of a withered little man in black from Verviers, who came to report to me that the young men of German birth in his town, who had become Belgian citizens under the Belgian law, had been ordered by the Germans to report for duty in the German army. The little man was greatly excited and could not understand why I did not interfere at once and put a stop to what he considered an outrage and a flagrant violation of international law, as indeed it was, if such a thing as international law could be said to exist any more in the world.

"*Mais vous êtes notre Ministre protecteur!*" he would argue again and again.

It had frequently been reported, though as often officially denied by the German authorities, that Belgians were to be incorporated in the German army. But an event had occurred that led people to believe that after all there might be much in the declared intention, and there was not only a new sensation, there was a new terror in town. At Brussels, at Verviers, in the arrondissement of Nivelles, and in Luxembourg, many young men born of German parents on Belgian soil had been summoned to the Meldeamt, where they were informed that notwithstanding

the fact that they had opted for Belgian nationality, they had not thereby lost their German nationality, but would have to render military service to the German Empire. They had been forced on the spot to submit to a physical examination, and then provisionally allowed their liberty until the military authorities of Aix-la-Chapelle should decide where they were to be sent for duty.

To justify the levy of these troops the Germans cited a new law, of July 22, 1913, which became effective January 1, 1914, defining the method whereby German citizenship could be lost. This law provided, among other things, that German citizens who should become citizens of any foreign nation thereby lost their German citizenship, but the German claim was that all Germans who had been naturalized as citizens of any foreign Power prior to January 1, 1914, when this law went into effect, had not come within its purview—that is, had not been, as it were, authorized to divest themselves of their German citizenship, and so had not lost and would not lose their German quality, but remained German citizens, and were therefore liable to perform military service for the German Empire. The preposterous claim opened immeasurable new possibilities of trouble in the world; what, for instance, if this was the German attitude, of the thousands and thousands of Germans naturalized as American citizens before the year 1914? Was the hour to come when some German General Staff would summon all of them to duty under the black, white, and red flag?

The memorial that was given to me to present was an able document, which while citing this law and referring to certain German legal opinions that were opposed to the view that the authorities just then took of it, based its argument on the international conventions of 1899 and 1907, signed at The Hague and ratified by Germany and by Belgium. These treaties required the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in an occupied country, and it was contended that thereby the right of option for nationality, prescribed by the Belgian code, was protected. The memorial protested against the declared intention of the Germans to incorporate in the German army all male persons of military age born in Belgium of German parentage, who, according to the Belgian law, on attaining their majority, had opted for the land of their birth, and so become Belgian citizens. Accord-

ing to international law such a practice was recognized as conferring complete citizenship, but the German view was different; it held that such men were German citizens because their fathers had been German citizens, and hence were called upon to bear arms for the German Empire. There were hundreds of young men whom this rule affected, young men whose parents had come from Germany to Belgium, there to be welcomed by the hospitality of a kindly, generous people, to found their homes, to make their fortunes, and to rear their families. The sons of these folk had never known Germany, most of them had never seen it; their interests, their associations, their friends, their sympathies, were all Belgian; on coming of age they had opted for the Belgian nationality; many of them had served in the Belgian army, and when the war came on they had been loyal to Belgium. Now they suddenly found themselves confronted with impressment in the German army, after which they would be marched to the front and forced to fight against those with whom their hearts and hopes were united.

The memorial presented in its formal and legal aspect the problem that was presented to me some days later in its human aspect. One morning a young man sat before me in my room, and with feelings he could scarcely control begged me to do something for him. He sat there fixing his dark eyes upon me and nervously clasping and unclasping his hands as he talked. He was a young lawyer, already well known at the Brussels Bar, and he had felt before the war that he had a career before him. And now——

"Now," he said, "this!" And he spread his hands wide in a gesture of despair. "I was born in Belgium," he went on, "I grew up in Belgium; I went to school and college in Belgium; my friends, my associations, my sympathies are all Belgian; I took the oath of allegiance to Belgium; I am a Belgian citizen; I *am* a Belgian." He paused a moment, mastering an emotion. "I served in the Garde Civique; I pursued my law studies here; I was admitted to the Bar. For a while I occupied a public position in the Belgian judicial service. And now, to say that I must serve in the German army and fight against Belgium!"

It was, of course, officially no affair of mine, as a representative of a neutral Power, and the fact that the relations of my

own country with Germany were very much strained only made my position all the more delicate. There was always, too, the *ravitaillement*, which meant food for the people, the very life of the Belgian nation, that must be preserved at all costs until the rupture with Germany, which every one must have known to be inevitable—the Von Tirpitzes were even then shouting "Out with the submarines!" There was no ground on which I could protest against the action that the German Government proposed to take. I was constantly confronted by that embarrassment so familiar to persons of public responsibility; each caller beholds his own trouble, is preoccupied by his own personal problem, considers it quite naturally the only and the most important problem in the world, and cannot understand why the public person cannot instantly isolate it as the one difficulty outstanding in the world; he cannot understand, and it is impossible to make him understand, that in relation to other problems which it may affect it is not important.

However, after many conferences with the Belgians and with such delicacy as I could employ, I chatted informally with Baron von der Lancken about it and persuaded him without much difficulty, I must admit, to receive the protest. The only condition he imposed was that the Belgians present their own memorial, and this they ultimately did. I believe that the Germans did not insist on the matter in the end; one of them told me that after all they intended only to take a census of young men who were thus situated, and I believe my lawyer with the German name and the Belgian citizenship was permitted to remain in Belgium.*

The question of the *engrais* was one that gave us endless difficulty. It was not causing the comment just then in Brussels

* I have since been informed that a certain number of naturalized Belgian subjects of German birth, some young, some old, were by force incorporated in the German army. While the German occupants seemed in the year 1916, the time of which I write, to have renounced all intention to apply their theory, it was in the following year resumed. In the months of September and October 1917 placards were posted in nearly all the Belgian cities ordering persons "without nationality, but of German extraction, and those of German birth who had acquired Belgian nationality," to present themselves at the Meldeamt of their vicinity to be incorporated in the German army. The Belgian Government solicited the intervention of the Pope and of the King of Spain, both of whom made representations to the German Government. The German authorities, while maintaining their right to treat Germans who had become naturalized subjects or citizens of other lands as liable to service under the German flag, abandoned, at least temporarily, the project.—B. W.

that other and more dramatic questions were, as, for instance, the offensive of the English and French, which had its reaction as far in the rear as Brussels, where extra sentinels were posted everywhere, or as the Russian advance, or the Austrian retreat, or the question of the young naturalized Germans, or the story of an aeroplane that had flown over the city in the night, or the fantastic tale that the German Emperor had come to Brussels and had had a meeting in the Palais d'Arenberg with Villalobar, and that the Marquis had thereupon gone forth to arrange peace. *Engrais* was not so sensational, but it had possibilities—of ammonia, for instance; taking *engrais* to Germany, the scientists there could extract the ammonia and with it make munitions of war. We discovered this one day by chance, and thereafter had long consultations to bring the *engrais* within the guaranties protecting Belgian products.

There was always some such problem in the *ravitaillement.* Coffee was scarce, and just then burned wheat was being sold as a substitute, and wheat was needed for bread. The Germans, when we approached them on this matter, delighted to have a new subject for the exercise of their talent of organization, said that they would at once create a new Zentrale to control the burned wheat, and in the despair that such methods produced I told them that if they continued they would undoubtedly have a superb organization for *ravitaillement,* but nothing to eat.

The question of the Banque Nationale was intrinsically more interesting, since it concerned that product at once the most necessary and the most contemptible known to man—money. At the outbreak of the war, as I have said, the Banque Nationale transferred all its funds to London, because several of the branch establishments of the bank in various villages of Belgium had been entered by German soldiers and their funds seized at the point of guns. When the German authorities asked the Banque Nationale to reopen its doors and to resume the transaction of business, the directors cited these instances of brigandage as reasons for not complying with the request and Von der Goltz Pasha gave the Bank a written promise to the effect that if it did so the institution would not be molested. On the strength of this assurance then, the Banque Nationale threw open its doors, but it threw them open to trouble, which promptly entered

in the form of the representatives of the Bank Abteilung. The difficulties that were harassing the directors that summer were primarily connected with the contribution of war imposed on Belgium. This contribution had been fixed in 1914 at 40,000,000 francs a month, and the sum was augmented each year until for 1917 it had attained 60,000,000 francs a month. The nine provinces of Belgium had been ordered to issue bonds to pay this contribution, and this the provincial councils had refused to do; then the Germans removed the Belgian provincial governors, installed German governors (*Präsidenten für Zivilverwaltungen*) in their place, and issued the bonds themselves in the name of the provinces and had the Präsidenten sign them. These bonds having thus been issued, the private banks of Brussels were ordered to buy them, and when they refused, they were informed that the Bank Abteilung would sequestrate and liquidate their property, and apply the assets to the purchase of the bonds. Placed thus between the alternative of buying the bonds or of being wrecked, the banks bought the bonds. The Germans ordered them to pay for the bonds in marks, and these marks were thereupon deposited by the officials of the Bank Abteilung in the Banque Nationale, which was ordered to issue against them an equivalent amount of Belgian bank-notes. This was done—under the usual menaces—and then the Banque Nationale was ordered not to pay out these marks, but to keep them in its vaults. Thus, in the course of time, millions of paper marks were accumulated in the vaults of the old buildings there in the Rue de Ligne behind Ste.-Gudule, several millions of marks that represented deposits. Then, early in July 1916, the chief of the Bank Abteilung, Von Lumm, whose *ante-bellum* visit to Brussels and to the Banque Nationale has already been referred to, ordered the Banque Nationale to transfer, against a receipt from his department, all those millions of marks to the Reichsbank at Berlin. The directors of the Banque Nationale, as patriots, refused. Von Lumm became more and more insistent, and, persuasion having failed, began to menace the directors with various punishments if they did not yield.

It was a troubled group of financiers that assembled day after day about the council table in the directors' chamber of the Bank and discussed the problem that confronted them. They had prepared solemn protests and had made representations. The

financial situation of the country, already so seriously compromised, was more and more threatened; there were rumours; other banks were fearing like measures and already there had been small runs on them; frightened depositors were beginning to withdraw their accounts; and in the midst of all this the Bank Abteilung demanded of every bank in Brussels a list of its depositors, with the amounts to the credit of each, and especially of foreign depositors.

Then one day came a demand from Von Lumm that 500,000,000 marks be immediately transferred to Berlin. The directors of the Banque Nationale formally refused; if the Bank Abteilung wished that amount of funds it would have to take it at the point of a gun.

Von Lumm hesitated, and there, for the time being, the matter stood. It was, of course, no official concern of mine; though from youth I had had the uncomfortable habit of being stirred to indignation and, too often perhaps, to protestation by the numerous spectacles of injustice that this life presents, I could turn to other things.

As, for instance, the incident of the Queen's Ambulance. Anything connected with the Queen of the Belgians acquires something of the interest, something of the delicate charm of Her Majesty's personality, and thus one morning in July—the 10th, as my notes record it—when certain gentlemen came to tell me that the Germans were about to take over the Queen's Ambulance, and to ask my assistance, I was at once not only interested but moved.

When I speak of the Queen's Ambulance I mean, of course, the hospital that Her Majesty had installed in the Royal Palace at the outbreak of the war. It would be more correct to say that the Palace had been transformed into a hospital, and a very large hospital, for the whole of it, save the private apartments of the royal family, had been made over into wards, with long rows of white beds and numerous operating theatres, all fitted out with the latest appliances of modern surgery. Her Majesty had done me the honour to show me through it herself only a few days before she left for that noble exile in the bleak, yellow dunes where the first of her royal spouse's dynasty had set foot on Belgian soil. Through all those stately halls she had passed, down the rows of cots, their white coverlets thrown back for the

occupants who were at that moment in full health, awaiting the fate that was about to send them there to suffer and to die; there was a little Belgian flag on each cot.

"The children put them there," Her Majesty had said, with that faint, exquisite smile.

I never passed the Palace without thinking of that day, without thinking of those little Belgian flags on the white cots, and of "the children." The flags were not there when I went to visit some British wounded prisoners; nor would the Belgian flag that used to float over the Palace greet my eyes when I passed, almost daily. I used to wonder when I should see it there again, whipping out the edges of its brightly coloured bars in the wind; sometimes I would invent a hope, or at least a pleasure, in imagining the brilliant scene—the wide, vacant Place, the grill, and the broad façade of the Palace, the Guides again, and the Lancers, the Carabiniers, the Neuvième de la Ligne, and all the other gallant regiments, and the King, tall and broad, with his simple manner, and the Queen, and the children, and the vast crowd, and the wild huzzas and the tears, and men falling down dead for very joy, as once more that standard of the honour of nations, the flag of black and yellow and red, was run up the royal staff to announce to mankind that justice had returned once more to the earth. Then we would take up life where we left it off on that hideous day, and be happy. . . .

Happy? But things never come to pass in this life as we plan them; and the scene of my impressions could not be as I imagined it. The flag will go back there some day, or else there is no meaning or order in the universe, but we shall not take up life where we left it off; that was only a fine, persistent dream that sustained many through years of the horrors of the Occupation. Life is change, and what it once was it can never be again; it will be other, and let us hope better, than the old; but it will be for the children of a generation that will not know war, and not for us, any more than for those *mutilés* who hobbled on canes or swung on crutches up and down behind the high gilded grills on sunny afternoons. We, too, shall be among the *mutilés*, even we of the rear, hobbling on, with broken illusions and frustrate hopes, to the end of our short days. . . .

The flag was no longer there over the Palace; instead there

floated the white flag with the red cross; and all the Palace windows, once so mysterious, stared blank with whitened panes on which the red cross of Geneva was painted; and at the entrance there were those ugly sentry-boxes of the Germans, striped black, white, and red, incongruous blotches of colour all foreign to the scene, and German sentinels in that dirty field-grey, sullen, morose, with ugly glances, far other than those Grenadiers in their tall bearskins, who used to present arms when we drove in. . . .

And now, on that morning in July, my callers told me that the Germans had ordered the hospital to be closed. It should be said, to the credit of the Germans, that they had always respected the Royal Palace; their flag never floated from its roof. But the order to dismantle might be, so it was feared, but the precursor of the entrance that had been so long dreaded. There had been innumerable Red Cross hospitals in Brussels at the outbreak of the war; many a handsome house was thus transformed. The Red Cross flag flew everywhere; there were those so determined either to extend to others its privileges, or to avail themselves of its protection, that they had it painted on their roofs. The Germans in time had ordered all these red crosses down, and in place of the hundreds of ambulances which they denoted they established four large hospitals, one in the Palais des Académies, one in the Avenue de la Couronne, one at the Caserne Baudouin, and another, if I remember well, in the Hôpital de Schaerbeek.

I broached the subject of the Queen's Ambulance to Von der Lancken that day there in the Louis XVI *salon*, after we had disposed of other matters. He was in full uniform, I remember, and wore his decorations, for the Governor-General was lunching with him that day. I asked him if it were true that they were about to dismantle the Queen's Ambulance.

"*Mais oui.*" And he went on to give me the varied reasons why it should be done; the four large hospitals were ample for the needs of all the wounded brought to Brussels; in the hospital at the Palace for a long time there had been only a small group of Belgian wounded who could as well be cared for in one of the other hospitals. There was no argument to oppose to his logic; he was surreptitiously glancing at the little watch on his wrist; it was near the hour for luncheon and the Governor-General

might arrive at any moment, and yet I detained him long enough to say that it was to be regretted; I told him about the children and the flags on the cots; and then—it was the Queen's Hospital, and after all one had a certain feeling about those things that appertain to a Queen; there was the question of taste; *ça ne serait pas chic;* but, of course, nothing to be done.

At the word *chic* Von der Lancken looked up and, reflecting a moment, said:

"*Vous avez raison.*"

And he made a note on a piece of paper.

As I went out into the courtyard the Governor-General was entering; I had a glimpse, like an impressionistic painting, of the grizzled old General, his collar of white broadcloth and the red facings, the decorations dangling at his throat, his great clanking sabre, his staff officers trailing along behind.

And when three days later Lancken told me that the order had been revoked, and that the Queen's Hospital would not be dismantled, I was glad to thank him, and to congratulate him on having been *chic.*

XXV. FÊTE-DAYS

I HAD gone to see Von der Lancken that day to present to him Mr. Albert Billings Ruddock, the new Secretary of Legation, whose coming was such a relief to me. He had been a secretary in our Embassy at Berlin, and his acquaintance with the German language, his knowledge of German ways, no less than his various abilities, made him an invaluable aid. He and his charming wife made life less difficult in a thousand ways, and it was our good fortune, too, just at that time, to be able to welcome Mrs. Vernon Kellogg to Brussels. She had come to join her husband, and it was her distinction to be the only woman ever officially connected with the C.R.B. She made an especial study of the charity that was being done by the women of Belgium, and she devoted herself unsparingly to furthering it, and to the work among the children, and in her, Belgium found a devoted friend whose tireless efforts for Belgium have never ceased, and have produced the largest results in gaining sympathy for Belgium's cause. These good friends did much to sustain our spirits,

drooping then, as spirits must in such an atmosphere, without respite or relief or holiday of any kind.

July brought our national holiday, and we had our celebration of the Fourth with the same ceremonies that had marked that of the preceding year. All day the people of Brussels came and left cards and flowers, and signed the book. M. Lemonnier, the Burgomaster, and his échevins came, and the Burgomaster with tears in his eyes made a little speech of felicitation, speaking with deep feeling of the work of the Commission and of what America had done. These days were full of the excitement and the hope created by the Battle of the Somme; we could hear the thunder of the mighty guns, and Brussels was anxious to believe that they were sounding her deliverance.

Anniversaries, however, were acquiring a significance that was saddening, since they served to remind us that the war was lasting long. "*Ça dure,*" the Belgians would say.

We had all the men of the C.R.B. to luncheon again on that Fourth of July, and in the little speech they insisted on my making I expressed to them the pleasure I felt in these annual gatherings, and when I said that as we gathered there year after year, the bonds that united us, etc., they gave a groan, and, as determined and neutral optimists, insisted that the war would soon be over.

The delegate from Liége, Mr. Arrowsmith, brought word to me of the terrible plight of the Russian prisoners, two thousand of them, whom the Germans had taken into the province of Liége to work on the railroad. The story was told in revolting detail, how the German taskmasters beat them, kicked them, flogged them, fed them on miserable and insufficient rations, so that, when weak from exhaustion and all the brutality they had endured they sank on the ground, they were left to die. Belgians, and Russians in Belgium, tried to aid them, but the Germans, who had no charity for them themselves, refused to allow them to profit by the charity of others.

I returned to the Legation late that afternoon to learn from my colleague, Mahmoud Khan, the Persian Minister, that Senator Halôt was to be condemned on the following morning, and probably to death. I had had no means of knowing that the matter was so serious, though Baron von der Lancken, in discussing it with me, had referred to it as *cette malheureuse affaire.* Mahmoud Khan and I made an effort to save the Senator, who

was a friend of Mahmoud's. We drew up a *requête en grâce*, had it signed by all the diplomats, and presented it to the authorities. Four days later we were informed that Senator Halôt had been condemned to fourteen years' imprisonment in Germany, and I should like to think that our efforts had had some effect in softening the hearts of his judges.*

That Fourth of July was filled with incidents. In the morning, at the very moment when M. Lemonnier was making his little speech of felicitation in the *salon* of the American Legation, the German *Polizei* were making a search at his residence, and, after causing her to pass *un mauvais quart d'heure*, had arrested Madame Lemonnier.

And there was an occurrence at Antwerp which, though it fell on the day before the Fourth, associated that city with the celebration of the day. The banks of Antwerp had all announced that in honour of the anniversary of American independence they would close on the Fourth of July. At this announcement Herr Fuchs, delegate of the Bank Abteilung, summoned a prominent banker of Antwerp and said that inasmuch as political demonstrations were not permitted, the banks of Antwerp, if they closed on the Fourth of July as a tribute to American independence, would no longer be treated with moderation. The Belgian banker said that they would not give way before any menace, that the banks of Antwerp had determined to close as a testimony, the only kind which under the circumstances they were permitted to give, of their gratitude to "the noble American people and their Government," and that if the Germans tried to prevent such a testimony it would be because of a secret hostility against the American people.

"And you wish to appear as if we shared your hostility? Never! The banks will close to-morrow, whatever you say or do."

And the delegate of the Bank Abteilung yielded, and said:

"Well, let it be as if I had said nothing."

It was evident from many indications, indeed, that the hostility to America was growing. During that summer Belgian merchants received in the letters written them by German merchants little cards on which was printed:

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* Senator Halôt has since been released and is in France.—B. W.

Gedenket der unzähligen Opfer
die an Americas Granaten
verbluten.

There were no felicitations from the Germans on our national fête-day that year; it may have been mere oversight, though oversights in diplomacy are not excused. I wondered if it could be because the Germans could not felicitate a *people* on their birthday as they could felicitate a King. On the fête-day of the King of Spain the Governor-General in full uniform, accompanied by his *aide*, had gone to the Spanish Legation expressly to pay his compliments, but it was doubtless a mere oversight in our case, and of no consequence in any event. The sentinels seemed to be growing uglier in their manner with every day, and that was only a reflection of their environment, or perhaps the war, not so joyous as it had been, was getting on their nerves; they never had a kind word from their own officers nor from the Belgians about them, and I can still see the gloomy face of the old man of the Landsturm on guard at Quatre-Bras, and how his face lighted up one day when, as he came up to look at my *Passierschein*, I spoke a few words of German to wish him good afternoon, and he looked up with open, astonished mouth that widened into a smile, the only one I ever saw on the face of a German soldier, as he exclaimed:

"*Ach! Ich danke Ihnen!*"

And I rode on my way thinking that if the question were left to the people, untroubled by generals, ministers, excellencies, and editors, wars would not last long in our world.

We had noted on the agenda at the Legation that Dr. Bull was to be released on the Fourth of July, and after three months' imprisonment we felt that he would be in a humour to appreciate liberty and to celebrate it with us. The Fourth came, but no Dr. Bull, and when I went to the Politische Abteilung to ask why he had not been released, Count von Moltke said that he would inquire. He called up the Kommandantur on the telephone that stood on his desk, spoke a few moments, hung up the apparatus, turned to me, and said:

"He is implicated in another affair and is being held pending an investigation."

I had drawn my sigh of relief prematurely; and here that

anxiety was to be lived all over again! And there at the Kommandantur I had to leave Dr. Bull and resume the familiar discussions as to the *ravitaillement*.

Dr. Reith, who represented the Politische Abteilung in the Vermittlungstellen, had been to see me on behalf of the Governor-General, who asked my opinion on several questions that had arisen; the Governor-General wished to know whether it would be proper to send to Germany linseed oil that was the product of seed grown by the Germans themselves on Belgian soil; whether or not German soldiers might eat fish caught in Belgian waters; what attitude would be assumed with reference to the purchase of cattle made by the Germans before the recent convention; what to do in the case of a Belgian peasant who insisted that the Germans buy his cattle, which, he claimed, were contaminated with disease by contact with German cattle; whether an officer's wife who had bought some hares would be permitted to take them with her to Germany. I said that if some old man of the Landsturm went fishing on Sunday and caught a carp he might eat it, but as for draining the fish-ponds and whipping streams of Belgium, and as for seining the rivers, that would never do; I consented, too, that the Belgian whose cattle had been contaminated by disease might be paid for them; but officers' wives might take too many hares to Germany, and as to recognition of contracts made before the convention was signed, it would open such a breach in the guaranties that all the cattle in Belgium might be driven through it. It was the linseed oil that was most difficult, and I referred that to the experts of the C.N. for their advice.

The month of July seems to have been prolific in births of free nations; we had celebrated our own national holiday, and on the 14th the French fête was observed by many merchants closing their shops, and two days later we were reminded of the approach of the Belgian national anniversary by the posting of an *affiche* prohibiting any demonstration by the Belgians on that day. Von Sauberzweig had gone, having been sent to the front in the north of France, and his functions as Military Governor of Brussels were then being discharged by General Hurt, Governor of Brabant. General Hurt, having been reminded no doubt of the celebration of the year before, included in his proclamation a prohibition of the closing of shops at unusual hours as well as the laying of flowers on public monuments, and the penalty of

disobedience this year was increased to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 20,000 marks.*

Once more then Brussels set itself to the congenial task of outwitting the Germans. By one of those mysterious and tacit understandings that no one could trace to their course, everybody that day appeared wearing a green ribbon, green being the colour of hope, and while it was no doubt discouraged it was not yet forbidden the Belgians to hope. And so the colour was every-

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* AVIS

Il est défendu de célébrer d'une manière quelconque la fête nationale belge du 21 juillet 1916, déclarée jour férié légal par la loi belge du 27 mai 1890.

Je préviens la population qu'elle devra s'abstenir de toutes démonstrations, telles que :

Réunions publiques, cortèges, rassemblements, harangues et discours, fêtes scolaires, déposition de fleurs devant certains monuments, etc., pavoisement d'édifices publics ou privés ;

Fermeture des magasins, cafés, etc., à des heures exceptionnelles.

Les infractions seront punies soit d'une peine d'emprisonnement de six mois au plus et d'une amende pouvant atteindre 20,000 mark, soit d'une de ces deux peines à l'exclusion de l'autre ; seront passibles de ces peines non seulement les auteurs de ces infractions, mais aussi les fauteurs et les complices.

J'attire, en outre, l'attention du public sur ce qu'il est défendu de répandre des écrits non censurés ou de porter des insignes d'une manière provocatrice.

Der Gouverneur von Brüssel und Brabant,

BRUXELLES, *le 12 juillet* 1916. HURT, *Generalleutnant.*

Translation

NOTICE

It is forbidden to celebrate in any manner whatsoever the Belgian national holiday of July 21, 1916, declared a legal holiday by the Belgian law of May 27, 1890.

I warn the population that it must refrain from all demonstrations, such as : Public reunions, parades, assemblies, harangues and speeches, academic ceremonies, the placing of flowers before certain monuments, etc., the decoration of public or private buildings ;

The closing of stores, cafés, etc., at unusual hours.

Infringements will be punished either by imprisonment not exceeding six months and a fine of not more than 20,000 marks, or by one of these two penalties to the exclusion of the other ; not only the originators of the infringements will be liable to these penalties, but also the abettors and the accomplices.

Furthermore, I draw the attention of the public to the fact that it is forbidden to circulate uncensored writings and to wear insignia in a provocative manner.

The Governor of Brussels and of Brabant,

BRUSSELS, *July* 12, 1916. HURT, *Lieutenant-General.*

AVIS

Mon interdiction de célébrer la fête nationale belge a déterminé un petit groupe de personnes irréfléchies à engager le public à résister à l'application de mon arrêté.

Afin d'éviter tout incident désagréable, je mets formellement les habitants en garde contre ces excitations, que ne peuvent que nuire aux intérêts de la population paisible du pays.

La peine prévue sera appliquée avec la plus grande rigueur et sans indulgence

where. Plants stripped of their flowers, displaying only their green leaves, were shown in shop windows, and the colour was worn in great knots of ribbon by the little griffons that went trotting with their mistresses along the boulevard, where the frock coat and the high hat, the classic symbols everywhere of impeccable respectability, were to be seen. The weather was fine, and great crowds were already preparing to spend the day in the leafy Bois when I drove through it in the morning on my way to see Franz van Holder, the painter, in the studio hidden away in the pretty garden of his home in the Avenue Mont-Joie. The people, in the satisfaction of the plan they had hit upon to celebrate their fête, were all in smiles. The shops were not closed, but they were empty; it was made a point of honour not to enter them, and most of the proprietors had given their clerks a holiday so that in none of them was there any one to wait upon any intending customers who were not privy to the universal conspiracy, and if any one wished to make a purchase he found the prices of articles outrageously and impossibly high.

"How much is that hat?" a man asked in a shop in the Rue de Namur.

"Fifty thousand francs," replied the patron.

Many shop windows had been emptied for the day, and in others there were significant allegorical arrangements of stock. In one shop in the Boulevard du Nord the proprietor displayed the portraits of the King and the Queen of the Belgians; he was at once arrested and the shop closed, and a little *affiche* put in the window giving the reason, and when a crowd gathered to

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à toute personne qui, le 21 juillet 1916, ou *ultérieurement*, participera à une démonstration quelconque, y compris la cessation du travail.

Der Gouverneur von Brüssel und Brabant,
BRUXELLES, *le 20 juillet* 1916. HURT, *Generalleutnant.*

Translation

NOTICE

My prescription against the celebration of the Belgian national holiday has caused a small group of unthinking persons to arouse the public to resistance against the application of my order.

In order to avoid any disagreeable incidents, I formally put the inhabitants on guard against these excitations, which can only harm the interests of the peaceable population of the country.

The penalty provided will be applied with the greatest rigour and without indulgence to every person who, on July 21 or *afterward*, participates in any demonstration whatsoever, including the cessation of work.

The Governor of Brussels and of Brabant,
BRUSSELS, *July* 20, 1916. HURT, *Lieutenant-General.*

read the *affiche* the *Polizei* charged them, clubbing the people, men, women, and children, with the butts of their guns.

There were many little scuffles. An officer at the head of a troop of the Guards rode into the Place de Brouckere and began to harangue the crowd in German. He raged and fumed in his gutturals, and was met by a great shout of derisive laughter; he spluttered and grew livid with rage, but the crowd only laughed the more loudly, and the Place de Brouckere was finally closed, and the Place des Martyrs roped off, but the people passed there in great throngs, and as they passed the men reverently lifted their tall hats. Many people wore combinations of the Belgian colours; one woman promenaded the boulevards with her three daughters, one dressed in black, one in yellow, and one in red.

At high noon the church of Ste.-Gudule was filled with throngs that invaded every corner of the stately old church. M. Lemonnier and the échevins of the city were there, with senators and deputies, investing the scene with the distinction of official presence. But there was a vibrant quality in the atmosphere, a palpitation of expectancy; men with eager faces stood on tiptoes and strained their eyes, awaiting an impressive scene; the Cardinal was expected. After the Evangel the throngs were suddenly agitated with excitement, and there he was, a striking figure, in a gold cope, his extraordinary height accentuated by the mitre on his brow. He came out of the sacristy, through the choir, bearing his crozier, preceded by a procession of priests. He came down into the aisle, and half-way down the nave moved on to the famous pulpit of carved oak, made by Henri Verbruggen in 1699, in the bizarre style that has become classic in Belgian churches; he ascended into the pulpit and there, amid the silence that fell upon the throng, he began his sermon.

"*Jerusalem facta est habitatio exterorum; dies festi ejus conversi sunt in luctum.*" He recalled the fact that it was the eighty-fifth anniversary of the national independence and looked forward to that day when, in the restored cathedrals and the rebuilt churches of Belgium, crowds like this, with their King and Queen and the royal princes, amid the sound of the bells, hand in hand, would renew their oaths to God, to their sovereign, and to their liberties, while bishops and priests in a communion of gratitude and joy would intone a triumphal *Te Deum*. But that day the hymns of joy expired on their lips,

they were like the captives in Babylon who hung their harps upon the willow-trees. But whatever their sorrows, he did not wish them to hate those who inflicted them. National concord among the Belgians united them to universal fraternity, and yet above this sentiment he placed the respect for right, without which no communion was possible either between individuals or nations. Violations of justice must be repressed. The conscience is given over to torture so long as the culpable is not put in his place, and to do this, to establish order, to restore equilibrium, peace must be founded on a basis of justice. St. Thomas Aquinas had proclaimed public vengeance as a virtue; how can one love order without hating disorder, how wish intelligently for peace without expelling that which troubles it? It was from these summits that one must consider the war in order to comprehend its amplitude.

He gave homage to the King and to his soldiers, the artisans of the moral grandeur of the nation. He asked the Belgians to pray for those who were no more, to exclude no one from their commiseration—the blood of Christ had flowed for all. The hour of deliverance was drawing near, but it had not yet come. He urged them to be patient, not to weaken in courage, and to leave to divine providence the perfection of their national education. He adjured them to allow the great law of the austerity of life to penetrate them, and he concluded:

"And just as at the front our heroes present the admirable and consoling image of that indissoluble union of a military fraternity which nothing can impair, so in our ranks, less serried and of a more fluctuating discipline, we should heartily observe the same patriotic concord. We will respect the truce imposed on our quarrels by the great cause which alone should employ and absorb all of our means of attack and of combat; and if the impious and vile, not understanding the urgency and the beauty of this national prescription, obstinately determine, in spite of all, to feed and to inflame those passions which separate us elsewhere, let us turn away our heads and, without replying to them, remain faithful to the pact of solidarity, of friendship, of good and loyal confidence which we, under the great impulsion of the war, have concluded with them despite themselves. The approaching day of the first centenary of our independence must find us stronger, more intrepid, more united than ever. Let us

prepare ourselves for it in labour, in patience, in fraternity, and when, in 1930, we shall remember the dark days from 1914 to 1916 they will appear to us the most luminous, the most majestic, and, on condition that we henceforth know how to will it, the happiest and most fecund of our national history. *Per crucem ad lucem*—out of sacrifice, the light."

The tall Cardinal went down out of the oaken pulpit. The strains of "La Brabançonne" filled the arches of the church. The cry of "*Vive le Roi! Vive la Belgique!*" rang above it, and the great wish of the Cardinal was realized in a kind of miracle of national reconciliation.

I had gone in the afternoon with my wife to the country-place of the Madoux, hidden in the edge of the forest beyond Woluwë, and when we returned to the Legation I found awaiting me two men and a woman. The man was in high hat and frock coat, with a ribbon in his buttonhole; the woman wore a large knot of green ribbon, while the other man had an effect of effacing himself as a kind of first citizen, to applaud what the rest said in the little colloquy that resulted. The elder man acted as spokesman, and removing his high hat, revealing a mass of hair as white as his snowy beard, he said that he had come to report to me that the *Polizei* were "brutalizing" (*brutaliser*) the crowd on the Boulevard du Nord; he reported this, and then stood as if awaiting some instant action on my part. I explained as sympathetically as I could the limitation of my powers, and when I had done the man stood there, his face grew long, a look almost of despair came to his eyes, and, as though his last hope were swept from him, he said pitifully:

"*Mais Excellence, nous comptons sur vous!*"

It was a constant source of poignant and unavailing regret with me that I could not perform the prodigies that those poor harried folk so touchingly expected; such was the unlimited confidence in the great Republic across the sea. Sometimes I had the uncomfortable feeling of being a kind of impostor, the pitiably little I could accomplish being so very small in comparison with all that I should have liked to do to help them in their sorrow and their pain.

XXVI. RETALIATION

IT was not to be expected, however, that the Germans could allow in two successive years such scenes to pass without resentment, and in the evening of that day an event occurred that gave them an excuse for the reprisals which it was not in their nature or their philosophy to forgo.

Cardinal Mercier during the afternoon had remained quietly indoors at the College of St.-Louis attending to the duties that had summoned him to Brussels. In the evening he left the College and was about to enter his motor-car to return to Malines when a group in the street caught sight of the tall figure, instantly recognized the patriotic Primate of Belgium, and broke into enthusiastic acclaim.

"*Vive le Cardinal! Vive le Cardinal!*"

His Eminence tried to still the applause by deprecatory gestures of the hands in the red gloves, hastily entered his automobile and at once disappeared down the Rue du Progrès. That was all that occurred.

The next day the city was fined one million marks. The punishment was announced to the Burgomaster in a letter addressed to him by General Hurt, Governor of Brussels.

> Monsieur the Governor-General [the letter began], in view of the circumstances which Belgium traverses at this moment, had supposed that a serious-minded population would of itself have renounced the idea of publicly celebrating its national holiday. Nevertheless, because of the experience of last year, he had decreed certain measures destined to prevent all demonstrations organized by the light and turbulent element.
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> In the well-understood interests of the population, the communal authorities of Greater Brussels have in good faith, intelligently and energetically, supported the prescriptions of the German authorities in such manner that it was possible throughout the day yesterday to avoid, until evening, unfortunate incidents, despite the fact that the unthinking portion of the population had invited the public, by an abundant distribution of handbills, not to follow the prescriptions.
>
> The German police paid no attention to the green ribbons, the public order not having been troubled by them.
>
> On the other hand, when, in the evening, Cardinal Mercier crossed the city in an automobile, there were produced manifestations in direct opposition to the prescriptions of the German authority of a nature to incite the population to resistance and to thoughtless acts. You will agree, Monsieur the Burgomaster, that no occupying Power in the world could endure such a provocation.

In consequence I proposed to Monsieur the Governor-General to inflict a fine on Greater Brussels.

Monsieur the Governor-General has carried out my proposition and has inflicted a fine of one million marks. He caused it to be observed on that occasion that it is only out of regard for the loyal collaboration given by the communal authorities in maintaining order that the fine inflicted was fixed at such a moderate figure.*

To this remarkable letter Burgomaster Lemonnier replied, pointing out its inconsistencies and injustices,† but the Germans did not recede, and the fine was collected.

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* MONSIEUR LE BOURGMESTRE,—M. le Gouverneur général avait cru que, dans les circonstances que traverse la Belgique en ce moment, une population sérieuse aurait d'elle-même renoncé à fêter publiquement sa fête nationale. Néanmoins, il avait, eu égard aux expériences faites l'année dernière, décrété des mesures d'ordre, qui devaient empêcher toute démonstration de la part d'éléments légers et turbulents.

Dans l'intérêt bien compris de la population, les autorités communales de l'agglomération bruxelloise ont loyalement, intelligemment et énergiquement soutenu les prescriptions de l'autorité allemande, de sorte qu'il a été possible, dans la journée d'hier, d'éviter jusqu'à la soirée des incidents fâcheux, quoique la partie irréfléchie de la population eût invité le public, par une abondante distribution de billets, à ne pas suivre ces prescriptions.

La police allemande ne s'est pas occupée du port des rubans verts, l'ordre public n'ayant pas été troublé.

Par contre, lorsque, dans la soirée, le cardinal Mercier a traversé la ville en automobile, il s'est produit des manifestations qui étaient en opposition directe avec les prescriptions de l'autorité allemande, et qui étaient de nature à inciter la population à la résistance et à des actes irréfléchis. Vous conviendrez, Monsieur le Bourgmestre, qu'aucune puissance occupante au monde ne peut souffrir une pareille provocation.

Par conséquent, j'ai proposé à M. le Gouverneur général d'infliger une amende à l'agglomération bruxelloise.

M. le Gouverneur général a donné suite à ma proposition et a infligé une amende d'un million de mark; il a fait remarquer à cette occasion que c'est uniquement par égard pour la collaboration loyale prêtée par les administrations communales pour le maintien de l'ordre, que l'amende infligée a été fixée à un chiffre aussi modéré.

Avec l'expression de ma considération.

HURT,
Lieutenant général et Gouverneur de Bruxelles et du Brabant.

† "It results from my information," said the Burgomaster, "that the manifestation aimed at resolves itself into cheers by which the inhabitants saluted His Eminence the Cardinal at the moment when he entered his automobile in quitting the College of St.-Louis.

"In the letter in which he informs us of the penalty inflicted on the Brussels population the Governor-General recognized . . . that the communal authority took all the measures in its power to assure order. . . . In these conditions it is certain that the alleged acclamations—which did not, however, disturb the peace—should be considered as individual acts for which the entire population cannot be held responsible. This condemnation, therefore, is in direct contradiction with Article 50 of The Hague Convention:

> "'No collective penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, can be inflicted upon a population because of individual acts for which it could not be considered responsible.'

"Besides, it is manifestly in opposition to the convention of October 12, 1914,

XXVII. THE ORANGERIE

THE custom which always prevailed in Brussels, as in many capitals, for the diplomats to live in their Legations—that is, to have their chancelleries in their homes—while not without its advantages is not lacking in its drawbacks. In those conditions in which we found ourselves it was doubly trying, for the day never ended, the work was never done, the shop was never closed. I was called at all hours, and as the callers were usually on some desperate errand I could not deny them. Night after night I would go up to my chamber with the appeals of some half-frantic wife, whose husband was condemned and waiting to be shot, in my ears; and I used to listen to similar heart-breaking tales before I could make my toilet in the morning. Save for the brief and fatiguing visit to America we had scarcely been out of Brussels since the war began, and never out of its depressing atmosphere; an afternoon at Ravenstein now and then, a luncheon or a tea or a dinner at some friend's, were the only

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relative to the payment to the German authority by the city of Brussels and the agglomeration of twenty-five millions of francs as a new contribution of war. Article 2 of that Convention is as follows:

> "'The indemnity thus paid by the agglomeration of Brussels being forty-five millions of francs, it is understood that there will not be imposed, either directly or indirectly, any new contribution on the inhabitants of the agglomeration of Brussels. In case, however, that a criminal attempt shall be committed against the German troops there will be imposed on the communes of the agglomeration in whose territory the attempt shall have been committed a contribution, or some other punishment.'

"Article 4 is as follows:

> "'German troops will not be lodged in private houses of the agglomeration of Brussels; I count on your help to fix the price which German officers lodged in dwellings will have to pay, and I beg your Administration to put itself in accord on this subject with the Intendance Militaire.'

"I myself negotiated that Convention with the German authority, and in order to obtain the adhesion of the communal authorities interested and to contract the loans necessary to the payment of the contribution, I called the attention of the communal administrations to the importance of these two clauses. The Administration approved the Convention, we contracted the loans, and after we had paid the sum demanded the German authority set at naught these two clauses. It lodged troops in a great many houses and imposed on us the expense of lodging, not only the troops, but also German employés of the railroads. Under this head we have to meet to-day expenses which may attain a million francs, and at this moment, by your last decision, there is imposed on us a new contribution for causes wholly foreign to those foreseen by the aforesaid Article 2 of the Convention.

"You will recognize, Excellency, that these decisions, incompatible with formal engagements, are of a nature to wound the sensibilities of our constituents.

respites we had. With the coming of Mr. Ruddock I was relieved of much of the routine work in the Legation, and he could discuss and settle many questions with the Germans. And so when August came I took a house in the charming Faubourg of Uccle, which, though but a quarter of an hour from the Legation, nevertheless gave the illusion of being in the country. It was known as the Orangerie and was a sort of dependency of the château of M. Josse Allard. It stood at one end of the park of the château in the midst of trees which, by their ingenious planting, concealed it from all the new houses that had sprung up in that quiet commune of Greater Brussels. It had a terrace that overlooked a pretty garden, planted that summer in beets, whose broad yellowing leaves replaced the green of the lawns, and the whole horizon was hedged about by trees, with red roofs showing through their interstices, and there were two tall sentinel poplars that looked like cypresses against the serene evening sky. It had a large *salon* furnished in Louis XVI, a library, a dining-room, a great veranda closed in glass for rainy days, and the master's chambers, all on one floor.

That which our population honours in Monsieur the Burgomaster Max and in His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, that which unites them in the same thought, is their attachment to the nation. In manifesting its sympathies for the Cardinal the population simply wished to express its patriotic sentiments.

" In his proclamation of September 2, 1914, did not the Governor-General von der Goltz say :

" ' I ask no one to renounce his patriotic sentiments.'

" And in the letter of Your Excellency of July 18, 1915, we read :

" ' I ask no one to renounce his ideals, neither to disavow, sometimes by a hypocritical manner, his convictions, but what I must expect of each one is a recognition of the real situation. That is to say that I, and my administration, in accordance with the laws of war and the laws of man, have the legal duty, and from that also the legal right, to administer the country and to expect the collaboration of the authorities of the country, as well as that of its intellectuals, ecclesiastic or lay.'

" And yet because some citizens have manifested their patriotic sentiments in acclaiming the Cardinal, without any offence for the occupant, you condemn the whole population.

" It must be recognized, besides, that such penalties are really overwhelming for the agglomeration of Brussels, already so heavily taxed. Constantly the communes have to resort to loans to aid and succour the unemployed population. In the city of Brussels alone, which counts actually less than 170,000 inhabitants, nearly 60,000 persons are nourished by the communal soups, and a great many other persons, who from a sense of dignity do not dare to appeal to that charity, must be helped privately.

" We have the profound conviction that after having taken cognizance of the situation the German authority will reconsider its decision, and that it will understand that the condemnation is unjustified as it tends to weaken the efforts of the communal administrations to assure public order and tranquillity.

" Le Bourgmestre f.f., MAURICE LEMONNIER."

I could scarcely wait for the night to come when we should go there, so eager was I to escape the tram-cars that, under the deprivations of the occupation, each day rattled more and more, and each night screeched around the corner of the Rue Belliard with louder squeals as grease grew rarer. To this was added the rumble of German motor-lorries, the snort of the motors of German officers, the *fiacres* rattling over the streets wherein the paving was never renewed any more, trains filled with soldiers bumping over the crossing, cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck, the crossing bell with its invariable five notes, out of tune and ending on a flat minor, the loud clumping of wooden shoes, people talking in the street, and all that. And above all, the imperative ring at the door—these were to be left behind, and would have to await the office hours in the morning. That first evening came, and I read "Jean Christophe" for a while, and then, with conscious relish, prepared to sleep. . . .

Such sylvan stillness! Only the trees rustling their leaves like whispered secrets outside my window! Then insects—strange, unknown, entomological noises; and then, slowly emerging one by one out of the silence, the howls and yelps of a whole countryside of dogs, baying the moon, if there was a moon. And our own dogs no better—Taï-Taï screaming in the room where Marie had interned her, and Kin-Kung whimpering with homesickness all night. There was a steeple clock, well enough, no doubt, in its time, those olden days of witches and evil spirits and sundials, before there was a clock in every household and a watch in every pocket, or at least on every wrist. It boomed away, its heavy notes borne on the east wind directly through my open window and to the very centre of the tympanum of my startled ear. It struck the quarter and the half hours, with trills and variations, so that after concluding one announcement it could have had only three or four minutes to prepare itself for the next, its mission being, I suppose, to keep mankind alert and ever on the *qui vive*. Somewhere a man was trying to master the art of playing the bugle. Then at dawn the birds began to scuffle and to sing—that joyous matutinal chorus. . . .

But one accustoms oneself to everything, even to sleeping in the country, and by and by I had adjusted myself to these sounds and they took their place in my subconsciousness, as had the rumbling trains and the squeaking trams and the roisterers

turned out of the cabarets at the Gare de Luxembourg, singing at midnight, or the Landsturm hymning at dawn the latest German victory.

And the little change was needed. The nerves of every one were overstrained. M. Francqui, suddenly ordered by his physician to take a rest, had gone to Emmanuel Janssen's country-place near La Hulpe; Villalobar was in Spain; M. Blancas, the Argentine Minister, had gone on the long voyage to his far-off home; and when all of one's associates have left town one has the impression that every one is out of town. The Germans had not left town, but there was a lull in our troubles, and when Mr. Kellogg and his wife came to us for the week-end we could talk of home and other things than war and the *ravitaillement* and German morals and manners. The Allards had gone to their château for the summer, and we had the presence of these delightful friends; Van Holder, the painter, was not far away; Baron Janssen was at Wolvendael, not many rods from us on the other side of Uccle; and the Ruddocks had taken a château for the summer on the Dreve de Lorraine, on the other side of the Bois. The morning ride to the Legation through the Bois was pleasant, and on Sundays there were strolls to St.-Job, which all Belgian artists love to paint, and to Drogenbusch, where there is a little church that is in the purest Flemish Gothic.

When Mr. Hoover came over from London we tried to induce him to relax, and through long Sunday afternoons we tried to talk of other things than calories. We failed in that; he would never rest; his tireless mind was always at work on the problem of food for the nations. I used to warn him that if he went on he risked the ironic fate of becoming the greatest authority on food on this planet, and of ruining his own digestion in the process, so that when he had it all scientifically rationed he would be unable to eat his own share. He would sit silently thinking, thinking, and one day out of his cogitations he said suddenly:

"How would it do to have each American city adopt a ruined Belgian or French city?"

And he began unfolding the new scheme then forming in his mind for the rehabilitation of the devastated portions of Belgium and Northern France; he was evolving his plan to have each city in America adopt, as it were, a Belgian or a French town and provide for its reconstruction.

He had come to Brussels late in July, and, M. Francqui turning his dark eyes on him with that droll expression that always adumbrated some pleasantry, had asked:

"Any bombs?"

Mr. Hoover's visits were always and necessarily coincident with some new crisis in the *ravitaillement*; he would arrive and announce it while we sat shivering with apprehension, and M. Francqui called these announcements "bombs," insisting that Mr. Hoover always carried at least one in his pocket. M. Francqui would get up and walk briskly around the room with his short, sturdy steps, plunge his hands one after the other into his pockets, and withdrawing them quickly make brisk motions as though he were throwing bombs right and left, to illustrate Mr. Hoover's progress through the world. The bomb this time was a demand of the British Government that the whole of the crop in the north of France be reserved to the civil population of the invaded territory, and when we had discussed it, and Mr. Hoover had returned to London, Mr. Kellogg went down to Charleville, where the German General Staff had its headquarters, to introduce the pleasant topic of conversation.

The work was growing constantly more and more difficult because the feeling against America was always mounting; the Germans résented that steady exercise of the pressure from Washington which prevented them from employing their beloved weapon of the submarine; the German newspapers were clamouring for submarine activities. Germany was proceeding to her logical and inevitable destiny of a military dictatorship; the only question was how long Von Bethmann could resist the influence of *Messieurs les militaires*. One of the officials at Brussels, when asked by an American newspaper correspondent, then lately in Brussels with a German cicerone, what they would do with the Belgians in case America were drawn into the war, had replied:

"We'd let them starve."

Thus Mr. Kellogg's work in the north of France was made more and more difficult, and we could count ourselves fortunate in having one of his intelligence and tact to discuss and arrange it.

M. Mitilineu, the Rumanian Chargé, had had a letter from a friend in France, saying that "*on sent l'arome de la paix*," but we

had no such delicate olfactories. Indeed, our senses told us otherwise, and when Ouang Yung Pao, the Chinese Minister, came to tell me that he was going away, and that he had no intention of returning—and would I look after his Legation and help his secretaries if they had any trouble?—I could imagine thoughts behind his inscrutable countenance that showed him to be of our mind.

However, there was the usual condemnation to be concerned about; a Belgian railway employé named Adelin Collon, with three others, had been condemned for spying or for treason, and was about to be shot. And we had the usual difficulty over the courier. The Germans were always reporting to us that the *militaires* insisted that the diplomats were sending letters. I had not sent any, or delivered any, but new exactions were constantly being made.

"But what proof have we that you do not send them?" a German official bluntly asked me one day.

I looked at him in amazement an instant, and then:

"The best proof in the world," I replied. "Because I tell you so."

He stared at me uncomprehending, and incapable of comprehending. The Belgians called it *la mentalité allemande*, and the mentality was the result of the German system, which, holding all men venal, and moved only by selfish and mean motives, and convinced that honour and goodwill do not exist and sway the majority of men, put its reliance on force instead of on reason. It was precisely that fact that made dealing with them so difficult; it was that which poisoned the very atmosphere we breathed. In it men became suspicious and distrustful, in spite of their better selves, and all through that summer we had petty difficulties that were even more wearying than the great ones. There were many complex questions in the exercise of the control of the imported food-stuffs and, what was much more difficult, of the native products, and much of our time was occupied in discussions of these details.

But for long weeks our preoccupying anxiety continued to be the disposition of the crop in the north of France, and Mr. Hoover and Mr. Kellogg went with the Baron von der Lancken to Berlin, where there was to be a great war council over the question. They returned several days later with the encouraging report

that the question was settled, in principle at least. They had found a human obstacle in the fact that the Germans complained of the Belgians having more to eat than the Germans, and there was much sentiment in favour of rationing the Belgians on the same economic scale to which the German appetite was then being restrained and adjusted. After Mr. Hoover and Mr. Kellogg had given me the news, sitting there on the glass veranda of the Orangerie, they gave me an interesting account of their meeting with General von Sauberzweig.

The former Military Governor of Brussels was then discharging the functions of Quartermaster-General on the General Staff at Charleville. He happened to be in Berlin, and through Baron von der Lancken asked Mr. Hoover and Mr. Kellogg if they would have tea with him at his hotel. They accepted, and the General at once entered into a justification of his course in the case of Edith Cavell. He referred to himself, in lugubrious irony, as "the murderer"; and to her—he was speaking German, in which Mr. Kellogg was thoroughly proficient—as "die Cavell." His explanation, advanced in justification of his conduct, was that Miss Cavell had been at the head of an extensive conspiracy to send young men to the front to kill Germans; his own son had just been the victim of a terrible wound, blinded for life by a bullet that traversed his head just behind the eyes; perhaps, argued Von Sauberzweig, the boy had been shot by one of these very young men whom Miss Cavell had aided to reach the front. He said that Miss Cavell was entitled to no sympathy as a nurse since she was paid for her professional services, and that he could not have reversed or altered the judgment of the military court that had tried and sentenced her without reflecting on the judgment of his brother-officers. General von Sauberzweig insisted upon discussing the case, much to the embarrassment of his guests, who were of another mind about it, and he gave them the impression of a man haunted by remorse and pursued by some insatiable, irresistible impulse to discuss this subject that seemed to lie so heavily on his mind.

Mr. Hoover had brought to me some specimens of German numismatic art, among them a medallion struck in celebration of the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and a brutal caricature of our President, both of them amazing evidences of German taste and culture. On the theory, attributed to Talleyrand, that indelicacy

is worse than crime, one could better understand the hideous and revolting deed that doomed the lovely ship and its precious cargo than one could understand the mind that would seek some artistic expression of the national satisfaction in it. The expression was not artistic, but it was fitting in its own intrinsic ugliness, and placed beside Belgian or French medals, since those two nations excel in the art, it might perhaps serve in a collection as a fitting symbol of the *Kultur* it celebrated.

Before a week had passed, however, Mr. Kellogg was not so sanguine as to the agreement on the crop, the vast and insuperable difficulty in settling a question with the Germans being that it is never settled, even after an agreement has been reached. The matter had been arranged in principle, but more difficult problems were encountered when we came to apply the principles. It had been agreed at Berlin that the crops should be reserved to the native population; then, one day, half sick with despair, Mr. Kellogg came to tell me that a German officer had arrived from Berlin to say that it would not be done. Then three weeks more of discussion, argument, debate, until, one Saturday afternoon, Mr. Kellogg arrived radiant and happy, his honest face all smiles, and he drew from his pocket and waved in triumph a paper, the signed agreement regarding those precious crops. He had won it fairly from the German General Staff, had obtained many concessions, preserving to the French four-fifths of all the food products raised on their own invaded soil. There was only one condition attached, and that was a characteristic one—England was to make no capital of the fact in her newspapers! It was a fine victory for Mr. Kellogg, and we were happy in felicitating him on it, and in that spirit we went over to the château to dine with the Allards, for the Kelloggs were spending the week-end with us.

A new Nuncio had come to Brussels, Monseigneur Locatelli, and he was dining at the Allards that evening, as was Monsieur le Doyen d'Uccle, a delightful elderly man who seldom left the peaceful walls of his *curé* a few blocks away. He was rotund, as a *curé* should be, and jolly, and concerned for us, since he asked me if his clock troubled me. I reassured his kindly interest by telling him that I had soon grown used to it, and we fell to talking about a little drama, a kind of tragedy in its way, even in the midst of the great tragedy in which we lived.

Sometime in the previous winter an American, Mr. N——, who, after long years in the Klondike, had emerged from the wilderness with the fortune he had accumulated, made the long journey all the way from Alaska to Brussels to settle some business pending there. He had come to call on me at the Legation, a pale, frail man, whose white hair and lean, wrinkled visage showed what price he had paid for his fortune, and gave him the appearance of the prematurely old. He had left some papers in my charge, saying that he was going to enter a hospital for a few days to undergo some minor surgical operation. A few days later I heard that he was dead, and one morning, as he was our countryman, Mr. Watts, our Consul-General, Gibson, and I had gone to the church to attend his funeral—the only mourners there. It was a grey day, and a dreary, pathetic little last scene in a life of such toil. The good doyen had been with him at the end, and the American had said, almost with his last breath :

"I was going to be a gentleman—and now I have to go away."

We had fixed on that Sunday for one of those excursions to which a friend of mine always refers as "pleasure exertions," and we were up and away in the rain the following morning to see the Château de Gaesbeek, not far from Brussels. An ancient fortress of the Middle Ages, it stood there surrounded by its moat, lifting its battlemented towers into the grey sky just as it did in the days when it had withstood the repeated assaults of Spaniards and Frenchmen and of the malcontents of its own land, in those skirmishes that used to be called battles. Count Egmont once lived there, and there is a great staircase that bears his name. The Lion of Flanders is still rampant on the heavy walls of the tower above the postern gate and the portcullis. The benefits of sightseeing, however, depend upon the mood one is in, and we were too much in and of the monstrous tragedy just then darkening and sickening the world to respond to the suggestion of the souvenirs of those other tragedies that have so regularly punctuated the progress of mankind. It seemed to me, indeed, as I wandered about, to be one of those sights which Dr. Johnson, speaking to Boswell of the Giant's Causeway, classified as worth seeing, but not worth going to see. Kellogg and I, in that comparative study of ancient and modern

culture which our position in Belgium enabled us to make, were fascinated by the *oubliette* and looked down into it a long while, trying to realize the sensations of the poor victims who had perished in its dark and evil depths. The human race did not seem to us just then to have made much progress, except in the application of the mechanical arts to those various deviltries in which it grows more and more prodigal and proficient, and because of that fact the châtelaine of Gaesbeek, who lives there only for a short while in the summer, evoking perhaps out of its past some reminiscence of the olden grandeur that was built up on the pain and misery and cruelty of those times, had prudently hidden away the best of its collections and furnishings lest German visitors, in their search for culture, should have them hauled off to ornament other castles beyond the storied Rhine.

But Monday morning would come soon, bringing with it the cares of control and Zentralen, the two problems that were to dog us to the very end. It would be as wearying to read of all those details as it would be to write them, almost as wearying as it was to live and to struggle with them. They involved the question of excess vegetables raised in Belgium, and of fats which the Germans were intent on getting into Germany to eke out their exiguous nourishment, and we spent many hours in discussions with the Germans in the yellow Louis XVI *salon* and in the American Legation.

The Zentralen continued to spring up like mushrooms of some noxious variety The Germans had just organized a new one to monopolize and distribute butter, and had fixed a maximum price, and the result was—as it always has been in history from the time of the French Revolution, wherever maximum prices have been decreed by statute, the law of things in general being so much more potent than the laws of man—the result was that butter seemed to exist no more anywhere in the world.

Eggs, too, were another object of the rage for regulation; the Germans had taken a census of the hens in Flanders, and issued a decree scientifically based on the result, demanding a certain number of thousands of eggs—so many hens, so many eggs. And we wondered how the poor hens thenceforth were to keep out of the Kommandantur. It was quite impossible to live up to so many regulations. Mr. Prestiss Gray, one of the officials of the C.R.B., had an experience of the difficulty when he drove

with another C.R.B. man to Vilvorde one afternoon in that month of August The *Passierschein* for the Commission motor in which he was riding authorized the car to contain five occupants; the sentinels at Vilvorde looked at the document, examined the car, and announced that as there were only two men in the car it could not pass. Mr. Gray explained, invoked the theory that the greater includes the less, but no; that pass called for five men and there were only two; there was something suspicious in the circumstance, and Mr. Gray must produce three more men —or not pass.

The Germans were beginning to regulate the restaurants, reducing the number of courses and the amount of meat that could be served, to which we could have no objection, for the meals that the German officers could procure in restaurants, when the rumour of them got back to Germany, served to increase the difficulty of keeping the *ravitaillement* in operation at all.

It was in that month of August that the circle of our friends was still further reduced by the death of the Baroness Lambert. The authorities had consented to give her a *laissez-passer*; she had gone to Paris, and the Baron had followed in the anxiety of the news of her illness. She died in her house at Paris, another victim of the war which had brought her so much sorrow. Her passing left a void in Brussels, where her brilliancy, her beauty, and her hospitality had made her popular in her circle. She was a woman of stately beauty, and she had seemed to fade and to decline almost visibly under the burden of that black woe which the war had brought to her land. It affected her as something compromising her innate distinction, as though it were an affront, a personal humiliation. And Brussels was a sadder place without her. The *salons* in the great house in the Avenue Marnix had been closed ever since the war, but she had continued to receive her friends; there was always a little group of them there at tea-time, and we often dined there. There seemed, too, an added touch of regret that she could not live to see that day which was spoken of as "when the King comes back." It was what almost all were trying to live for, the one hope to which people clung, the one incentive that kept them alive. "After the war," every one would say, in that imperative need of hope, in that supreme desire to return to normal life. And death seemed somehow more tragic and more sad under these circumstances, when every

one wished to see the war end, prayed to wake from the long and monstrous nightmare.

The war seemed to add another tragedy to old age. I have a picture in my memory of that most charming of aristocratic old gentlemen, Count John d'Oultremont, sitting in the library of his ancient home there in the Rue Bréderode, behind the Palace of the King. It was a romantic, rambling old house, with wings and winding halls and passages, with an interior of soft, faded tapestries, Louis XIV furnishings, and the dull sheen of old portraits—one of them of the Count himself when he was a young and handsome officer of the Guides, in the days when they called him "*le beau d'Oultremont.*" He sat there, as it were, waiting.

"*Je suis né dans cette maison,*" he remarked to me one evening after dinner, "*et j'espère y mourir.*"

His step seemed not so firm as he took his morning constitutional along the boulevard, and his form was bending. When I heard not long ago that he had been roused from his bed at night by the *Polizei*, and within the hour hurried off to Germany as a hostage, I thought of what he had said that night. He was already ill, and when he got to Germany the Germans offered to release him to go home, but he refused to accept their favours unless his companions, other gentlemen of Brussels who had been arrested with him, were released also, an attitude worthy of the nobleman who as Grand Maréchal of the Court of Léopold II had so gracefully done the honours to the German Emperor when he was a guest of the Belgians in Brussels.

"*J'espère y mourir.*" It seemed very little to ask of fate, and the fates granted his prayer, perhaps sooner than might have been had he not been dragged off to a German prison as a hostage, for he barely reached home from his exile in time to die.

He was not the only one of the old family to be arrested; the Countess Georges d'Oultremont spent a while in prison in the summer under notice, on a charge of having dispatched letters, I believe; she was ill at the time, and when the *Polizei* ransacked her home, just around the corner from the Legation, they found and bore away some cards bearing the prayer: "*Sacré Cœur de Jésus, protège la Belgique!*" Even prayers, it seemed, were incriminating.

On August 29 the rumour ran through Brussels that Rumania

had entered the war on the side of the Allies. There was a rush to the Avenue Louise to see if the blue, yellow, and red flag had come down. The next day the rumour was confirmed, and on the last day of the month M. Mitilineu—"Mittie," as we called him—came with his pretty wife to bid us au revoir. They were leaving the next day for Holland and thence to Havre. Two or three days later I met Mitilineu far out on the Avenue de Tervueren walking with his bulldog along the parterres under the trees. At the last moment the Germans would not allow them to leave, alleging that the Rumanians had prevented the German Minister from leaving Bukarest. They were held there for a whole fortnight of anxiety, and then finally allowed to go to France—but by way of Denmark! They were escorted on the long detour by Count von Moltke through Germany and Schleswig-Holstein to the Danish frontier, and there, after Count von Moltke had left them, they were compelled to wait for days and to sleep at night with sentinels constantly at the door.*

The family of the Burgomaster, M. Lemonnier, constantly the object of pitiless and petty persecution, had again been involved in difficulties. One day, September 15, 1916, two Germans from the secret police appeared at M. Lemonnier's residence in the Avenue Louise, and the Burgomaster being absent, asked to see Madame Lemonnier. When she appeared they demanded eight hundred marks. Surprised, she asked why she should give them this sum, and they said it was because she had been condemned by the German tribunal at Namur to pay that amount as a fine.

Madame Lemonnier was stupefied. She had never been haled before the tribunal at Namur, had had no notice of any action against her, had never been informed that she was charged with any offence, had never been interrogated, had not been in Namur for more than two years, in fact knew nothing about it. The two German agents told her that unless she paid this sum at once they would seize her furniture. She refused, and they took away some vases and other *objets d'art.* Madame Lemonnier caused an inquiry to be made, and learned that she had been condemned by the tribunal at Namur, without any notice, without any opportunity to be heard or to defend herself—on the unsupported statement of a person who claimed that she

* M. Mitilineu has since died in a sanatorium in France.—B. W.

had received printed matter offensive to Germany, which had been sent by Madame Lemonnier. Some weeks later German policemen came again to the residence of the Burgomaster, took out the furniture, piled it up on the sidewalk, loaded it on a cart, and a few days later, having inserted notices in the so-called newspapers published in Brussels that the furniture of the Burgomaster would be sold for the payment of debt, put the furniture up at auction and sold it.

XXVIII. BANK ABTEILUNG AND YEGGMEN

I LOOK back now on those autumn days at the Orangerie with gratitude for the seclusion that, when evening came, it gave from the depression, and sometimes the horror, of the days in town. It was not peace, but it was a semblance of peace, and we could pretend a peace even when we knew that peace existed nowhere in Europe. But as autumn advanced we had something more than a presentiment that peace was farther off from Europe than ever, and that before it came again to the earth our own country would be swept into the vortex of the war. The great conflict was growing more bitter, there was a lower, deeper note of savage hatred in the chorus of universal strife; the great tragedy seemed to be whelming to some awful doom. At evening we imagined a more portentous whir in the Zeppelins sailing low and passing directly over our roof on their far flight across the English Channel, monstrous birds of night, grim and black in the deep purple skies. At morning we would feel it again when we were awakened by the burst of the bombs the English and French aviators were hurling on the hangars of those Zeppelins, and by the boom of the shrapnel the Germans were firing in their effort to bring them down, even if the efforts were unsuccessful; the morose old men of the Landsturm were not very expert as marksmen. Then at night there was always the thud of the guns along the Somme, deep, distant, lugubrious; the sound had come to have something of the permanence and persistence of the roar of some mighty waterfall, producing the appalling sense one has sometimes at Niagara, that almost insupportable impatience with the sound, a feeling that it must stop, if but for an instant's surcease in its mighty pain, and then the consciousness that it has gone on always, and will go on, for ever and for ever.

And yet there are impressions of mornings of pearly fogs, days of the glitter of the low September sun, and in the late afternoons the peasants digging potatoes, turning up the soft brown earth and burning the dead vines, the white smoke drifting off over the château. The whole world of Belgium was wearing the white scarf of those potato fires in those days, the children now and then roasting a potato in the coals, improvising a feast. Or perhaps the remembered impression is of Van Holder squinting at me from behind his easel, or the ride home from the Legation through the Bois, long shafts of sunlight lighting the vivid green boles and gilding the fallen leaves. There were Corots everywhere in nature those days, with the melancholy light of the world's sorrow in them, and if there were not Corots everywhere painting them, there were painters everywhere squatting at their easels, painters who either dared the Kommandantur or were unable to resist the temptation to ask its permission. I recall Sunday afternoons, talking with the Allard children in the garden behind the greenhouses—Collette with the lovely eyes and the grave expression, Antoine with the golden hair, and little Olivier with his funny sayings. . . .

"*Pourquoi as-tu mordu ta gouvernante, Olivier?*" I asked him.

"*Ah, elle m'ennuyait et—j'ai eu une crise de nerfs.*"

Alas! we were all more or less subject to *crises de nerfs* in those days; Brussels had not been so nervous and excited since the fall of Antwerp. The hopes raised by the Battle of the Somme, the constant bombing of the aviators, the entry of Rumania in the war, the experience of the Mitilineus, something, I know not what, in the air, produced a curious psychology in the crowd; the rumours were never so thick, and the people were persuaded that the Germans were about to retreat.

They were at least sending every available man to the front. There were no more sentinels at Quatre-Bras; the bridges even were often unguarded. Several of the minor employés we were accustomed to see in civilian dress at the Politische Abteilung wore faces that were long with Teutonic melancholy because they had been ordered to hold themselves in readiness to leave for the front. In all the departments of the civil government there was a tremendous activity, everybody bustling about in the zeal of the functionary bent on justifying his existence and employment, trying to show how indispensable he was.

The bombing was a common occurrence. One warm evening we were dining at the Josse Allards'; we were in the *salon* after dinner. We were standing, we men, somewhat aside, smoking. Suddenly there came three deep detonations. The evening was warm, and we thought it was thunder, but the sound was followed by a veritable cannonade, and we all ran out on to the terrace, and there, in the clear, luminous sky, the moon hanging full and golden over the dark outline of the trees, the flashes of exploding shells, very faint at first glance, then awe-inspiring, then terrible, as all the implications rushed upon one—that daring lad flying up there in the moonlight. We watched in silence. Then a shell seemed to fall in the park. We went indoors. Madame Allard was pale and shaken, thinking perhaps of her brother in the flying corps. De Sinçay was there; perhaps he, too, was thinking of his boy, but he began playing at billiards with the Chevalier de Wouters, calmly knocking the balls about.

The aviator of that night, however, was another Brussels boy, and after dashing his bombs down on the hangar at Evere, or on that at the Plaine de Manœuvres, he flew over the city, very low, below the trajectory of the anti-aircraft guns, grazing the roofs of houses, performing daring evolutions over the Place de Brouckère, throwing out some coloured lights and a bundle of papers, a kind of proclamation, all to the wild delight of the frantically cheering and applauding crowd. The papers which the aviator threw down were addresses, printed in French and in Flemish, saying:

"*Belges! La fin approche! . . . Le moment de la délivrance approche! Vivent les Alliés! Vive la Belgique! Vive le Roi!*" *

Brussels was enthusiastic all the next day, but the escapade was not without its tragedy, for a shell fired over the city at the aviator fell in the Rue de l'Hôtel des Monnaies, and exploding, killed a poor shopgirl standing in the doorway of a house where she had just sought shelter in vain.

A few days later an *affiche* was posted announcing that as punishment for the cheers in the Place de Brouckère that evening,

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* BELGES!

La fin approche.

Devant Verdun, l'admirable et héroïque résistance de l'armée française a brisé la formidable offensive allemande.

Sur la Somme, les armées françaises avancent victorieusement.

En Volhynie et en Galicie, l'armée autrichienne est mise en déroute par

and for the signals that, as the *affiche* alleged, had been given, the people of Brussels, during eight days, must all be indoors by eight o'clock. But this was not all; the burgomasters of the communes of the agglomeration of Brussels were convoked by the German authorities and notified that at the next visit of aviators, accompanied by any demonstration on the part of the citizens, the city would be fined thirty million marks.

It was not a fortnight later that aviators came again, in the dawn, and I lay in bed and listened to the distant battle in the air. It is not a pleasant thing to be awakened out of sleep at dawn to hear the dull report of bombs thrown by aviators, even when one knows that they are come in pursuit of the Zeppelin one has heard whirring above one's roof at twilight on its evil westward mission across the Channel! . . .

Fifteen houses were demolished in that raid, thirteen persons

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l'armée russe, et ses débris, soutenus par des corps d'Allemands et Turcs, ne parviennent pas à enrayer la poussée continue de nos alliés.

Les Italiens ont rejeté l'invasion du Trentin, et ont enlevé, après des efforts magnifiques, les positions inexpugnables de Görz.

Enfin, la Roumanie s'est rangée du côté du droit.

Belges, vous ne resterez plus longtemps sous le joug de l'envahisseur.

Votre courage, votre dignité, votre fierté indomptable font l'admiration du monde.

Votre vaillante armée vous rejoindra bientôt; avec l'aide de nos puissants alliés elle chassera l'ennemi du sol natal.

Le moment de la délivrance approche.

Vivent les Alliés!
Vive la Belgique!
Vive le Roi!

Translation

BELGIANS!

The end is near.

Before Verdun, the splendid and heroic resistance of the French army has broken the formidable German offensive.

On the Somme, the French armies are advancing victoriously.

In Volhynia and in Galicia, the Austrian army has been put to flight by the Russian army, and its remnants, supported by the German and Turkish troops, do not succeed in checking the continued advance of our allies.

The Italians have checked the invasion of the Trentino, and have carried, after magnificent efforts, the impregnable positions of Goritz.

And lastly, Rumania has ranged herself on the side of right.

Belgians, you will not remain much longer under the yoke of the invader.

Your courage, your dignity, your indomitable pride, are the admiration of the world.

Your valiant army will soon rejoin you; with the aid of our powerful allies it will chase the enemy from the natal soil.

The moment of deliverance approaches.

Long live the Allies!
Long live Belgium!
Long live the King!

killed, and twenty-eight wounded by the shells fired by the German anti-aircraft guns. The Belgians were all persuaded that the deaths were not due to accident, but that the German gunners had been instructed to train their guns, and to calculate the time of the explosion of their shells, so that they would fall in the city and work their havoc.

The Germans, in their *affiche*,* announced, not it seemed without satisfaction, the result of the raid in the killed and wounded

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* AVIS

Dans la nuit du 6 au 7 de ce mois, il a été constaté que de différentes parties du centre de la ville on a donné des signaux lumineux à un aviateur ennemi. En outre, à cette occasion, des manifestations se sont produites dans les rues.

Pour la partie de la ville de Bruxelles située entre le boulevard de l'Entrepôt, le boulevard Barthélemy, le boulevard de Waterloo, le boulevard du Régent, le boulevard Bischoffsheim, le boulevard du Jardin-Botanique, le boulevard d'Anvers, et le square Sainctelette ;

Pour la partie de Molenbeek-St.-Jean située à l'est de la gare de l'Allée-Verte et pour tout le territoire de la commune de St.-Josse-ten-Noode, j'ordonne ce qui suit :

1°.—Du 12 au 18 de ce mois (ces deux jours y compris), tous les établissements publics servant aux divertissements, tels que les théâtres, cinémas, concerts, etc., tous les restaurants, cafés, magasins, maisons de commerce, devront être fermés à 9 heures du soir. Il ne sera fait exception que pour les restaurants, etc., qui auront obtenu de la Kommandantur la permission de rester ouverts plus longtemps ;

2°.—De 9 h. 30 du soir à 4 heures du matin, seules pourront circuler dans les rues les personnes qui en auront obtenu la permission écrite d'une autorité allemande.

La dite interdiction n'est pas applicable aux personnes de nationalité allemande et aux ressortissants des pays alliés ou neutres. Ces personnes devront prouver leur nationalité en montrant leurs certificats d'identité.

La dite interdiction n'est pas non plus applicable aux fonctionnaires de la police communale portant leur uniforme, aux employés de tramways et des sociétés de veilleurs de nuit et d'autres entreprises analogues, à la condition qu'ils portent l'uniforme de leurs sociétés et prouvent leur qualité d'employé.

Les infractions aux présentes dispositions seront punies soit d'une amende pouvant atteindre 10,000 mark et d'une peine d'emprisonnement de trois mois au plus, soit d'une de ces deux peines à l'exclusion de l'autre. En outre, on pourra prononcer la fermeture, pour une période de temps plus ou moins longue, des établissements publics servant aux divertissements, des restaurants, cafés et magasins, etc.

Les tribunaux et commandants militaires sont compétents pour juger les dites infractions.

Der Gouverneur von Brüssel und Brabant,

BRUXELLES, *le* 11 *septembre*, 1916. HURT, *Generalleutnant.*

Translation

NOTICE

During the night of the 6th–7th of this month it has been established that in different parts of the centre of the city luminous signals were given to an enemy aviator. In addition, on this occasion there were manifestations in the streets.

For that part of the city of Brussels situated between the Boulevard de l'Entrepôt, the Boulevard Barthélemy, the Boulevard de Waterloo, the Boulevard

among the Belgian population, and I was asked to make representations, not only to the Germans, but to the Allies, in an effort to induce them to cease to send aviators over Brussels—a *démarche* which it was clearly not in my province to make.

Not many days passed on which I was not asked to make representations of some kind, and I did so when I could find any valid excuse for venturing where, considering the Germans' manner of receiving suggestions, even angels, unless they belonged to the very highest hierarchy, might have feared to tread. I recall one Saturday afternoon when I had gone to Ravenstein; a man came there to ask me to intercede for a Belgian who was about to be condemned as a spy; when I reached the Orangerie that evening another man came to ask me to help another Belgian; then Madame L—— came, on behalf of her husband, just then condemned to fourteen days' solitary confinement, and to pay a fine of five thousand marks for having in his possession a copy of *La Libre Belgique*.

The same day I was informed that Professor Cattier, one of the most cultured men in Belgium, had been seized the evening before, just as he got off a tram-car near his home, and was to be

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du Régent, the Boulevard Bischoffsheim, the Boulevard du Jardin-Botanique, the Boulevard d'Anvers, and the Square Sainctelette;

For that part of Molenbeek-St.-Jean situated east of the station of the Allée-Verte, and for the entire territory of the commune of St.-Josse-ten-Noode, I order as follows:

1.—From the 12th to the 18th of this month inclusive all the public establishments of amusement, such as theatres, cinemas, concerts, etc., all restaurants, cafés, shops, houses of commerce, must be closed at 9 o'clock in the evening. The only exception made will be for those restaurants, etc., which obtain from the Kommandantur permission to remain open for a longer time.

2.—From 9.30 in the evening to 4 o'clock in the morning only those persons can be in the streets who have obtained for that purpose the written permission of a German authority.

The said interdiction is not applicable to persons of German nationality or citizens of allied or neutral countries. These persons must prove their nationality by showing their certificate of identity.

The said interdiction does not apply either to functionaries of the communal police in uniform, to employés of the tramways and of the societies of night-watchers and other similar enterprises, on condition that they wear the uniform of their societies or prove their quality of employés.

Infractions of the present order will be punished either by a fine which may be as high as 10,000 marks and imprisonment not exceeding three weeks, or one of these penalties to the exclusion of the other. Besides, the establishments used for amusement, restaurants, cafés, shops, etc., may be closed for a period more or less long.

The military tribunals and commandants are competent to try the said infractions.

The Governor of Brussels and Brabant,

BRUSSELS, *September* 11, 1916. HURT, *Lieutenant-General.*

sent off at once to Germany as "undesirable." No reason was given for his arrest, no trial was allowed him. He was a lawyer, a professor in the university; he had been once a judge of the International Court at Alexandria. He had taken no part in the political movements in Belgium under the occupation, but had quietly continued to occupy himself with his own affairs. No one could imagine a reason, or even a pretext, for his arrest. It was supposed by the gossips that the deportation was in some way connected with the difficulties that the Banque Nationale was then having with the authorities, but that was due to a confusion of Professor Cattier with M. Cartier, a director of the Banque Nationale, who had just been arrested. I waited several days, and then one morning, a favourable opportunity presenting itself, I made an inquiry about him. He was accused of no military or political offence; the fact was simply, as I learned at the Politische Abteilung, that at one time before the war, in a difference of opinion he had had with a German, he had written a letter that offended this German, who, just then occupying a post in the Government of Occupation, had used his position and the influence it gave him to take this unspeakably mean and cowardly revenge on one who had offended him. Professor Cattier had many friends in Brussels, and they were deeply concerned for him and his fate. He was taken to Germany, and there was nothing to be done, then or later. But long weeks afterward word came from a prominent German official at Berlin to the effect that if the American Minister were to ask the man who was responsible for this persecution of Professor Cattier, he would relent and have him restored to his home. In order to save myself the possibility of a rebuff I had a man who knew the official sound him in order to see if it were true that he was so disposed, and I learned that far from welcoming such a request from the American Minister he would resent it, and that there was no prospect of rescuing Professor Cattier from the German's wild and implacable resentment.

It was only what might be expected in a State where there were in force no principles other than that of autocracy, which always works by favour, interest, influence, or terror. Every deed was coloured by the personality of the official concerned in its commission, and this was why the rule in Brussels was not so terrible under some governors as under others; this was why

life was more endurable in the Hainaut, where a man of reason, and even of mildness, was governor. And this fact may explain, too, why the word Hasselt came to possess under the occupation a sinister connotation and a reputation which the quiet little provincial town of Limbourg, on the edge of the desolate Campine, had never done anything to deserve. There sat, almost constantly, in that town, a court martial whose bloody assizes seemed to be without end; to hear that some one had been sent to Hasselt was to shiver with dread and apprehension, for most people who were taken to Hasselt never returned.

There, during the latter part of that month of September, a great court martial was in progress, trying over sixty persons for spying or for treason in time of war; and that meant, in the Legation, women in tears, pleading in a confidence that was pathetic enough to break the heart they naïvely thought to be the only one it was necessary to touch, yet never sufficient to move the heart whose dictates alone could have availed. Before the month was over seventeen had been condemned to death, many of the others to imprisonment at hard labour for life, and most of the remaining to some rigid penalty in those German prisons whose horrid secrets are never revealed, whose pains are never even temporarily mitigated by those revulsions of public sentiment which now and then make for some reform in our own.

A woman came all the way from Luxembourg to ask my aid; her son and her daughter, too, were among the accused in that trial, as were others of her family; besides, she had sons in the Belgian army at the front. She had had no illusions as to the fate reserved for her boy; it would be death, she felt, and she had not waited for the sentence to be pronounced. Accompanied by a sister and a niece she had set out on what, under the conditions that prevailed in Belgium, was a long pilgrimage to Brussels to plead for her son. At Brussels a lawyer told her that not only her son but her daughter had been condemned to death, and that they were about to be shot, and the mother collapsed. Thus it was her sister who came, and she and her daughter sat there in their black garb, weeping, begging, pleading, imploring—and I, who would have done so much, quite powerless in the midst of all that welter of woe in which the world had been plunged.

Among those condemned to death in that trial was the Burgomaster of Namur, M. Gedenvaux. He was fifty years old; he

had a wife and five children; he had toiled incessantly, early and late, from the beginning of the war, in the terrible situation in which those times placed the mayor of a Belgian town, with the German authorities on the one side ordering him to adopt one course, and his own population on the other clamouring for him to adopt another. Two persons among the accused had informed the Germans that the Burgomaster had acted as a spy for the Belgian Government; the Burgomaster denied this, but said that on three occasions he had received in his office a courier of the Belgian Government at Havre, and that he had given him reports on the condition of the city of Namur, not of military value, but merely concerning the *ravitaillement*.

I made an appeal for mercy on behalf of the condemned. The Nuncio did the same, and so did Villalobar—not long back from Madrid and San Sebastian, full of the gossip of all the European capitals—and we did what we could, hoping for some good effect of our pleas.

In the meantime Brussels was shaken by another sensation, which came as the *dénouement* of all those difficulties with the Banque Nationale. The Bank Abteilung, which had been so long trying to induce the Banque Nationale to deposit in the Reichsbank at Berlin its accumulation of German paper marks, and had invariably been told that if it wished this money it could have it only at the point of a gun, had at last hit on an expedient that impressed it as gracefully avoiding the crude methods sanctioned by bandits. In August it had written to the Bank ordering that the pledges, which all banks in Brussels in order to continue in business were required to give the Bank Abteilung, either by the deposit of approved securities or by bonds with the names of Brussels wealthy men on them, be paid in actual cash in German marks at Berlin. And by a happy coincidence the amount of security required was precisely the amount of German marks in the Bank! The Bank protested, and after three weeks of discussion and correspondence the Germans threatened to sequestrate and liquidate the Société Générale, another large bank in Brussels, which had no other than the ordinary business relations with the Banque Nationale. The threat that the Société Générale was to be liquidated swelled into a rumour that it had been liquidated, and there were the beginnings of a panic. The directors of the Banque Nationale, not

wishing to involve the other institutions, then met with the directors of the Société Générale; the conferences lasted throughout several days, and the directors of the Banque Nationale decided finally that rather than involve another organization, they, under these threats, would cede. The only question was as to how it should be done. There were, as in all groups, two wings, the right and the left, the more conservative urging that inasmuch as they were compelled to yield to superior force a formal refusal was sufficient, the more radical insisting on actual physical resistance so that the Germans would be forced to take violent measures and to march in their soldiers with fixed bayonets. The final decision, I believe, was that the distinction was scarcely worth discussing, and in the end the Germans came, accompanied by a dozen armed soldiers, and took from the vaults of the Banque Nationale 600,000,000 marks ($120,000,000), and from the Société Générale 200,000,000 marks.

There were those in Brussels who thought that the banks had allowed the marks to accumulate in their vaults because it was not considered good form in Brussels to pay anybody in German money. The German mark, under a decree of Von Bissing, circulated at 1.25 francs in Brussels; it was a crime to refuse German money at that rate. If one entered a shop and gave a 20-franc note, the proprietor in giving change would say:

"*Pardon, monsieur, est-ce que monsieur veut bien accepter l'argent allemand? C'est tout ce que j'ai pour le moment.*"

And as it was not good form to offer it, so it was not good form to refuse it. But the Banque Nationale had been permitted to pay out over its counters only the notes that the Société Générale was authorized to issue, the notes that bore the picture of Rubens or of Queen Marie-Louise, the Germans having refused to permit the notes to be adorned by the portrait of the reigning monarch, or by the Belgian arms, or by any emblem of Belgian sovereignty, or indeed anything that touched more nearly the patriotic sentiment of the people.

When the complicated financial transaction was finally understood, there was indignation all over Brussels. The effect of the mechanism devised by the Bank Abteilung was to compel Belgium to pay its war contribution twice, first in marks by purchasing the provincial bonds, then in Belgian bank-notes

which they were compelled to substitute for the marks on deposit—these marks which the Banque Nationale was not allowed to use, and which were "transferred," as the euphemism of the Bank Abteilung would have it, to the Reichsbank at Berlin. Men of affairs could scarcely discuss the spoliation calmly. The Bank Abteilung, I believe, had a theory that justified it in seizing this money; * it was designed to reduce the cover of the Reichs-

* BRUXELLES, *le* 15 *septembre* 1916.

Quoique les Alliés poursuivent impitoyablement contre l'Allemagne une guerre économique contraire à tous les principes du droit international, sur le terrain des affaires l'Empire allemand ne traite pas la Belgique en ennemie. Il n'a jamais été question de défendre d'effectuer des payements à la Belgique et dès les premiers jours de l'année 1915, on a levé le séquestre pesant sur l'actif des banques belges en Allemagne, actif s'élevant à plus de 200 millions de francs. Les contributions de guerre imposées à la Belgique ont été si mesurées jusqu'ici, que le pays peut facilement les produire, sans nuire à sa vie économique; d'autre part, les dépenses des troupes allemandes dépassent sensiblement la contribution de guerre à fournir par la population belge. L'argent allemand coule largement dans le pays et a permis de rétablir normalement la circulation des valeurs. Les avantages de cette politique économique ont largement profité à la Belgique.

On ne pouvait cependant, à la longue, laisser à la Reichsbank la charge d'assurer la circulation fiduciaire en Belgique. C'est pour cette raison qu'à fin 1914 la Société Générale obtint le privilège d'émission jadis conféré à la Banque Nationale, pour la raison que cette dernière ayant transféré à Londres à peu près tout son actif, y compris son encaisse d'or et de métal, n'était plus en état de fonctionner comme Banque d'Emission. La Société Générale de Belgique fut autorisée, sur la base de ses statuts, à émettre des billets jusqu'à concurrence de trois fois la valeur de son avoir: en or—barres ou monnaies—en monnaies de métal coursables en Belgique, en billets de la Reichsbank allemande, en billets des caisses d'Etat et des caisses de prêts allemandes, aussi bien qu'en crédits sur les banques étrangères.

Il se produisit peu à peu d'extraordinaires disponibilités en Belgique, de telle façon que des quantités considérables d'argent allemand et principalement de billets de la Reichsbank, superflues dans la circulation, s'amassèrent dans les caisses du Département d'émission de la Société Générale et de la Banque Nationale de Belgique. Pour faciliter aux banques l'utilisation des billets allemands qu'elles recevaient, l'on avait introduit dans les statuts du département d'émission de la Société Générale une clause disant que l'avoir à l'étranger et par conséquent dans les banques allemandes également, pourrait servir, tout comme les billets de la Reichsbank eux-mêmes, à couvrir les émissions de billets belges jusqu'à concurrence de trois fois leur valeur. L'intérêt financier bien entendu de la Banque Nationale et du Département d'émission de la Société Générale semblait leur commander d'employer leur encaisse, toujours plus considérable, de billets allemands et de billets de caisses, à se créer des crédits sur les banques allemandes.

On ne saurait trop dire quelles ont bien pu être les raisons qui ont déterminé les chefs des deux banques à ne pas faire usage de cette possibilité.

Ce qui est certain, c'est que l'intérêt de la Reichsbank ne permettait d'aucune façon que pour des centaines de millions de billets s'entassent dans ces deux établissements d'émission. C'était amener une élévation du chiffre de la circulation de la Reichsbank, qu'aucune raison économique ne justifiait. C'est pour cette raison que l'administration allemande en Belgique a demandé que les encaisses de ces banques, en billets de la Reichsbank et en billets de caisses allemandes, inutiles à la circulation, soient employés à la création de crédits sur les Banques allemandes. Les conseils généraux des deux banques belges ont

bank at Berlin, and the Germans referred to it as a loan and offered to pay interest on it, but the interest was indignantly refused.

It may be that terminology can change the quality of a deed and make it something less or something more than it is. I do not know. I used to know a man years ago, of whom I drew a picture as accurately as I could in the character of the yeggman Curley, in "The Turn of the Balance." Curley had a theory too; he expounded it to me many times, sometimes in his cell during those long hours in which I used to talk to him that time I defended him for murder. He would have scorned to pick a pocket, even if he could have done so; he would not steal from the poor; he would not commit burglary, because he held that

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décidé de se rendre à cette demande. Ils ont pris cette décision pour le motif qu'elle ne heurte en rien les intérêts de leurs établissements, tandis qu'un refus de satisfaire au désir de l'administration allemande eut montré clairement que la gestion des deux banques était de nature à porter préjudice aux intérêts nationaux de l'Empire allemand, ce qui eut infailliblement amené la mise sous séquestre des deux banques.

Il est regrettable qu'il se rencontre en Belgique des gens qui n'hésitent pas à répandre à ce sujet des bruits mensongers, ne reposant sur rien et qui sont de nature à nuire aux intérêts de leur propre pays.

Il est inutile d'insister sur ces mensonges, qui ont naturellement été accueillis par la Presse favorable à l'Entente. Ce qui doit être dit expressément, c'est que d'aucune façon il n'a été question d'une mainmise sur l'argent ou sur les valeurs, c'est qu'en second lieu l'arrestation des sieurs Carlier et Cattier, à qui dans certains milieux on voudrait décerner l'auréole du martyre, n'a aucune espèce de rapport avec toute cette affaire.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *September* 15, 1916.

While the Allies pursue pitilessly against Germany an economic war contrary to all the principles of international law, in the world of affairs the German Empire does not treat Belgium as an enemy. There has never been any idea of prohibiting payments to Belgium, and since the first days of the year 1915 the sequestration placed on the assets of Belgian banks in Germany has been lifted, assets amounting to more than two hundred millions of francs. The contributions of war imposed on Belgium have thus far been so moderate that the country could easily produce them without harming its economic life; besides, the expenditure of the German troops exceeds sensibly the contribution of war the Belgian population has to furnish. German money flows largely in the country, and has permitted the re-establishment of the normal circulation of values. Belgium has greatly profited by the advantages of this economic policy.

However, it is impossible in the end to leave to the Reichsbank the burden of assuring the note circulation in Belgium. It is for this reason that at the end of 1914 the Société Générale obtained the privilege of emission theretofore conferred on the Banque Nationale, for the reason that the latter having transferred to London nearly all of its assets, including its gold and metal, was no longer able to function as a bank of emission. The Société Générale de Belgique was authorized, on the basis of its statutes, to issue bills to the extent of three

it was unfair to frighten people out of their sleep at night, and anyhow, that was not in his line. He would not harm women or children, and if a farmer had given him a meal at his home, that farmer and all that he had was sacred in his sight and he would protect him from other thieves. (He always referred to himself baldly as a thief.) But he held that, for him at least—he would not impose his morals on others—it was justifiable to rob post offices, the Standard Oil Company, railroads, and banks.

I often thought in those days of Curley, and of the Singer, and of Old Sam, and others of his pals. I used to see their forms behind those bars and wonder why they could not have thought of organizing a Bank Abteilung. But no, they could not have done that either; lawless as they were, and abandoned, there

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times the value of its possessions in gold—either in bars or money—in money that was legally current in Belgium, in bills of the German Reichsbank, in bills of the State Treasury or the Treasury of German Loans, as well as in credits on foreign banks.

Little by little there were thus produced amounts of money in Belgium to such an extent that a considerable quantity of German money, and principally bills of the Reichsbank, superfluous in the circulation, were piled up in the safes of the Department of Emission of the Société Générale and of the Banque Nationale de Belgique. In order to aid the banks to use the German bills that they received, there was introduced in the statute of the Department of Emission of the Société Générale a clause saying that their foreign credits, and consequently those as well in German banks, could serve, like the bank bills of the Reichsbank themselves, to cover the emissions of Belgian bills to the extent of three times their value. The well-understood financial interest of the Banque Nationale and of the Department of Emission of the Société Générale seemed to require them to use their own funds of German bills and bank-notes, increasing all the time, in the creation of credits in German banks.

It is impossible to say what could have been the reasons which determined the heads of the two banks not to make use of such a possibility.

What is certain is that it is the interest of the Reichsbank not to permit by any way hundreds of millions of bank-notes to pile up in the Departments of Emission. Such a course would elevate the circulation of the Reichsbank, which no economical reason would justify. For this reason the German administration in Belgium has demanded that the funds of these banks in Reichsbank bills and in German bank-notes useless in circulation shall be employed to create credits in German banks. The directors of the two Belgian banks have decided to accede to this request. They have reached this decision because it will nowise injure the situation of their establishments, while the refusal to satisfy the desire of the German administration would have shown clearly that the direction of the two banks was in the nature to injure the interests of the German Empire, which would instantly have brought about the sequestration of the two banks.

It is to be regretted that it should be found in Belgium persons that should not hesitate to spread on this subject lying rumours which repose on nothing and which are of the nature to injure the interest of their own country.

It is useless to insist on these lies, which are naturally being welcomed by the Press devoted to the Entente. What should be expressly said is that in no way has there been a question of seizing money or values, and, in the second place, that the arrest of Messrs. Carlier and Cattier, to whom in certain circles the aureola of martyrs has been given, has nothing whatever to do with this affair.

were certain laws they would not break; the laws of hospitality, for instance.

XXIX. "BELGIUM WILL LEARN WHAT WAR IS"

THERE was endless and horrid fascination in the sound of the guns that never boomed so loudly as in that month of September; people were discussing it all the time and bringing forth remarkable theories to explain why they were heard so much more clearly on some days than on others, so much more loudly in some places than in others. There were scientific explanations by the wise, in which they talked of curves of reverberation, and such things. All I knew was that sometimes at night at the Orangerie they sounded as though they were at the very gates of Brussels, and yet, alas! they were never any nearer. The aspect of the city underwent another striking change in the middle of that month. I must have spoken somewhere in these pages of the sudden revival of the old fashion of bicycle-riding in Brussels. The Germans had taken all the horses except those used for drawing the wagons of the breweries, and finally they took these too, and that autumn the heavy *camions* were trundled through the streets by yokes of oxen. There were no motors except those of the Germans, of the C.N., the C.R.B., and the diplomats. People had taken to riding bicycles as a means of transport, and the boulevards and the Avenue Louise swarmed with them, two long streams coming and going. They wobbled about, so that it was an agony to ride in a motor; indeed it was almost always something like that in Belgium, where there have never been any traffic rules, and where the communal spirit of independence is so strong, and the love of personal liberty so intense, that every self-respecting Belgian makes it a point of honour not to get out of the way if he happens to be standing in the middle of the road; he would almost prefer to be run down than to feel that he had been weak enough to yield.

There were few bicycles in Brussels at the beginning of the war, and German agents did a large business immediately thereafter in selling them, and then, as the Belgians insisted, simply because the Germans had sold all their bicycles, there was a new *affiche* revoking the permission to ride them, and commanding the people to turn in their rubber tyres. Then, another oppor-

tunity for *les zwanzeurs*—long lines of bicycles rolling recklessly on the naked fellies of their wheels, the riders, with their rubber tyres *en bandoulière* across their shoulders, on their way to give them up. And the next day the streets were all deserted from kerb to kerb.

Another change that had something of the sadness there is in all change befell that month in Brussels, though it was due only indirectly to the Germans. There were all over Brussels many *pâtisseries*. Brussels is equally famous with Paris for those dainty confections of the pastrycook's art—the *Madeleines*, the *petits fours*, *babas au rhum*, *tartelettes aux fruits*, *cornets à la crème*—what delights! And then those delicate and delicious buns, or muffins, or scones, *la brioche*! We were taught in school that Marie-Antoinette, when told that the people had no bread, said: "Well, let them eat cake," and the remark, as quoted, has done her memory much evil. As a matter of fact, however, she said no such thing; what she said was: "*Qu'ils mangent de la brioche.*" It makes all the difference in the world. . . .

But it all took flour, though pastry as light as that they made in Brussels could have taken very little flour, and the officials of the C.R.B. doomed the institution to extinction. It was a little tragedy in its way, only understood by those who knew what a part the *pâtisseries* played in Brussels life; they were hallowed by custom, they had almost the dignity of a constitutional institution. To doom their abolition was as though some one should decree the sudden suppression of baked beans in Boston, or of beaten biscuits in Virginia, or of tea and toasted muffins in England. The *pâtisserie* occupied in the affections of Brussels a place like that which the soda-water fountain holds in those of our own people. They were crowded every afternoon. Whole families repaired to them at tea-time to taste the delicious cakes, though instead of tea most of them drank coffee or chocolate. There the people would sit around the little tables, as at some genial social centre; it was a common meeting-place for reunion, gossip, and the day's gazette. The date of their last baking was a notable one, September 27, 1916. The patrons were as sad as the proprietors, but the *pâtisseries* had to go because flour was too precious, and the proprietors of the *pâtisseries*, instead of giving up, began making a sort of flour out of almonds and out of rice, and inventing new kinds of cakes.

There came to me one morning, when Baron von der Lancken sent me a formal note, an echo of an old tragedy in this world, He wrote to ask me to consent to the exemption from the latest restrictions of the *ravitaillement* of the household of Charlotte, former Empress of Mexico, who lived on and on under the lengthening shadow of one of the imperial adventures of the Third Napoleon. The Empress could not eat the grey bread, could she have white? I had already been appealed to in the matter of the provisioning of the estate, and I consented, of course, and we arranged the matter so that she might retain for the use of herself and her household the native produce of her restricted domain about the gloomy château at Meysse.

It was the one problem of the *ravitaillement* easily settled, and the problems seemed to be increasing each day. It was always the same—the impossibility to secure a reasonable compliance with the guarantees concerning native produce. The exceptions that we had admitted were being used by the *militaires* to justify every kind of infraction; cattle were being lifted and driven off across the border; butter was being seized—even from the farm of M. Solvay, the President of the Comité National. It was growing more and more difficult to exercise control; if the C.R.B. delegates reported that the soldiers were taking food, the *militaires* darkly hinted at spying; it was not permitted to make observations as to the conduct of soldiers. The Germans, too, and apparently with deliberation, tried to exasperate the C.N., to induce its members to do something of which complaint could be made; poor Kellogg was wellnigh worn out. His secluded existence in the academic grove had not developed for him that protective coloration which long years dealing with human nature in the ugly form it so often assumes in politics, provide—sometimes. . . .

It was indeed an impossibility that we had undertaken to carry out, a miracle we had impiously tried to perform. We could control the imported food because it remained in the hands of the Belgian or American organisms; but the native foods—the soldiers would take that where they found it, and when they went home to Germany they filled their valises with it. And the Zentralen—there was no human way of circumventing them, and in despair we decided to ask for representation on those vicious contrivances for evil.

What made it all the more difficult was that the Germans were in bad temper as the result of the Battle of the Somme and the advance of the British troops, whose distant unceasing drum-fire we could always hear. The Germans, indeed, were discouraged with the situation of their armies; never before, in fact, had they considered themselves so nearly beaten, probably never before were they so nearly beaten. Von Hindenburg, it was said, had been in Belgium and had criticized Von Bissing, characterizing his reign as too lenient, urging new rigours—the city should be closed at six o'clock in the evening, all citizens of countries at war with Germany should be placed in detention camps, and, worst of all, there was the first suggestion of that monstrous cruelty, the deportation as slaves of Belgian workmen. There was a quarrel between the two, and Von Bissing had hurried off to Berlin to protest against Hindenburg's interference. It was at the moment when the military party in Germany was getting the upper hand; Von Tirpitz was clamouring, the reopening of the submarine war was being urged; Von Bethmann was tottering to his fall; his speech in the Reichstag, warlike as it was, did not satisfy the mad warriors into whose hands Germany was more and more confiding her destinies.

"Now Belgium will learn what war is," said one of the officers at headquarters, with what seemed almost like a personal satisfaction in the prospect.

We felt the reaction of all this ugly feeling in the meetings at which its effects were discussed, whether in the American Legation or in the Spanish Legation, where Villalobar received us with such ceremony there in the upper *salon* hung with the paintings of Goya, each of us with a little table to write on, at five o'clock his men serving tea and chocolate, and passing around cigarettes. The feeling gave a somewhat more sombre atmosphere to the reunions of the Comité National, and was adumbrated more and more in the serious faces of the members. But most of all it was apparent in the meetings we had with the Germans.

Discussion with the Germans was apt to be difficult because of the wide difference between our fundamental point of view; it seems to be almost constitutionally impossible for them to realize that there can be any other point of view than their own, and the methods they use in war they use sometimes in diplomacy. I cannot say that it was a definite and studied policy to attempt

to frighten the opposite party, and thus make him more amenable, reduce him to a frame of mind in which he would be more easily affected and impressed, but they generally opened all discussions by attempts to create terror and alarm, predicting all sorts of dreadful things, horrors and catastrophes, a kind of preliminary shelling of the trenches. At each new meeting we were met by statements to the effect that the Comité National would have to be abolished, that the *ravitaillement* would have to end, that the men in the C.R.B. would have to be replaced by others, that perhaps all the diplomatic privileges would be suspended, etc. There were painful scenes, black looks, shouting, gesticulating, threats to pull down the whole work of the *ravitaillement*, and let the Belgians starve. And all to be gone through with every time before the discussion could be undertaken.

When October came the Germans turned back their clocks an hour to announce that summer time had been changed to the old time, and thus set their clocks with the Belgian clocks; but the Belgians turned their clocks back an hour—they would not have *l'heure boche.*

The resistance was firm, even if the spirits of Brussels were low. The hopes of a retreat had gone the way of so many other hopes; the winter was coming on, and there was in the very atmosphere of those rainy days of early autumn not only the looming prospect of another dark and desperate winter but some sinister, unnamed dread, summed up for me one day when M. Francqui said to me:

"*Les choses se gâtent.*"

"*Les choses se gâtent!*" I can see the dark face, full of sorrow, full of pain; the world was looking dark those early October days. The low grey skies, like those of the old Dutch masters, the leaves falling in damp masses, the cold wind blowing in from the sea, gave a melancholy tone to nature that accorded well with the sadness in the heart of men. The conditions of life were more and more difficult; prices of necessities had increased to extravagant proportions. But more than all else there was some presentiment in the air, the portent of some vague, unknown, and monstrous catastrophe. German submarines had appeared in American waters; the controversy begun by the blowing up of the *Lusitania* would not down. The younger officers at the Politische Abteilung, mentioning the

U.53, could not restrain the enthusiasm that they invariably displayed in any new form of frightfulness.*

What was more serious, the delegates of the C.R.B. were reporting wholesale purchases, requisition, and exportation of native products. Our agreement of April was being violated more and more. We had sufficient evidence on which to base the statement that there was a systematic attempt to help supply the needs of the military authorities in the occupied territory and the needs of the civil population in Germany. German troops in the commune of Néchin had ordered the Burgomaster to furnish before evening of a certain day 50,000 kilos of potatoes, and to load them on to the railway wagons, and it required the labours of the whole population to comply with the order. In the provinces of Brabant and Liége goats and sheep were being purchased for exportation to Germany or to the front. There was a lively market of speculators in food at Welkanraedt, on the German border. It seemed as though the whole work was about to break down under the difficulties that accumulated.

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* Comparative Table of Prices of Staple Food Articles in Brussels (Autumn 1916)

	Price before the War	Price, Autumn 1916	Increase Percentage
Flour	kilo Frs. 0.20	Frs. 2.25	1025
Sugar	,, ,, 0.60	,, 4.00	566
Coffee	,, ,, 3.00	,, 11.00	266
Chicory	,, ,, 0.50	,, 2.50	400
Bread	,, ,, 0.28	,, 0.60	114
Beef, veal, mutton	,, ,, 2.60	,, 7.00	169
Fresh pork	,, ,, 2.60	,, 9.00	246
Salted pork	,, ,, 2.30	,, 10.00	334
Cooked ham	,, ,, 3.50	,, 15.00	328
Suet, etc.	,, ,, 2.00	,, 8.00	300
Lard	,, ,, 2.50	,, 11.00	340
Butter	,, ,, 3.75	,, 12.50	233
Cheese	,, ,, 1.30	,, 6.50	400
Milk	litre ,, 0.22	,, 0.50	127
Cream	,, ,, 2.00	,, 7.00	250
Rice	kilo ,, 1.20	,, 4.00	233
Macaroni, noodles	,, ,, 0.95	,, 4.00	421
Dried vegetables	,, ,, 0.95	,, 4.00	421
Chocolate, cocoa	,, ,, 3.50	,, 12.00	242
Olive oil	litre ,, 3.00	,, 25.00	733
Black soap	kilo ,, 0.40	,, 12.50	3025
"Sunlight" soap, 4 pieces	,, ,, 0.40	,, 6.50	1525
Sal soda	,, ,, 0.06	,, 0.55	1200
Seed oil	litre ,, 1.50	,, 17.50	1066

The price of cauliflowers, carrots, and turnips had increased 300 per cent.
The price of ordinary fruits had increased 300 per cent.

We had made new and vigorous protests, asking for a more rigorous control and for representation on the Zentralen, and in order to give additional force to these representations we had asked an interview with the Governor-General.

When he received us in the Ministry of Arts and Sciences that we might present our protest to him in person, Villalobar, Van Vollenhoven, and I, Von Bissing was looking depressed and ill; he seemed older, and showed the haggard marks of care; I wondered if the quarrel with Hindenburg had had anything to do with this unaccustomed air, less vigorous than we were used to in him. Prussian soldier though he was, he was not always for Prussian methods; he had some conception of milder means, and he had occasionally resisted the military element. But Hindenburg had risen to the position almost of dictator; the military were in the saddle and were riding roughshod over all civilian scruples—and Bissing's power was waning.

When I asked if he were in good health he put his wrinkled hand wearily to his head, and said:

"*Non, le climat d'ici ne me convient pas.*"

Villalobar gave me the glance the remark must infallibly provoke. The old soldier had been shooting again in the Ardennes, and bagged three deer and some wild boar; game was plentiful just then in those old forests where the animals had taken refuge from the dangers of those fields where men were hunting each other in the north of France. He wore no decorations as he stood there that day in the *salon*, in an almost shabby uniform, before a portrait of King Albert.

There was at times something very human about the old man. Catch him in the right mood and one could obtain anything, if it was in the nature of a personal favour, from him. I had been greatly worried over some young American scapegraces, who, dining, and perhaps indulging too liberally, in a restaurant one evening, had mocked some German officers by caricaturing their manner of bowing, saluting, eating, and drinking. The officers had had the young men arrested, and they were in a much more serious predicament than they realized. I had made numerous *démarches* in their favour, but had been unable to secure the dismissal of the charges against them; the military faction was for pursuing them. I had used all the arguments I could think of, but to no avail. I had even got Villalobar to speak a word

in their favour, and he had written me a note in which he had said, in the tolerance he had for all human weakness, "It was only youth," and he had added a pensive and envious "Alas!" That day, then, when we had presented and discussed our protest, I lingered and asked the Governor-General to let off my American boys, and to give them passes to Holland. He had heard of the incident, and was not at first disposed to be lenient; the sacred uniform was involved. I argued with him, and finally, by a lucky stroke of psychology, I said bluntly:

"But they were drunk."

"Oh!" he cried, as if a sudden flood of light had been shed on the dark complication, "they were drunk, were they? Then I'll let them go. Don't worry any more about them."

He gave orders there and then to Lancken, and the boys were released immediately, and I adjured them never to minimize the reports of their state on that evening of their dinner until they were safe across the Holland border.

The second trial of Dr. Bull was coming on; we had just learned that he was accused of complicity in the complot which had cost Miss Cavell her life, charged with having given her a thousand francs to aid British soldiers. I obtained permission for Mr. Ruddock to attend the trial, and for two days he sat in the Senate chamber and looked on while a court martial decided the fate of sixteen persons accused of having conspired with Miss Cavell to aid young men in crossing the frontier. They had been betrayed by a letter written by one of the group. Dr. Bull did not make in this trial the favourable impression he had made in the other; he enraged his judges by saying that he had given money to Englishmen because, as he said, since the Germans shot their English prisoners, he could thereby save the lives of his countrymen. To our intense relief, however, the prosecutor asked, not for the death penalty, as we had feared he would, but for six years' imprisonment. This penalty was imposed then, and we were once more relieved; and then a few days later we heard that Dr. Bull was implicated in another matter. Mr. Ruddock went to St.-Gilles Prison and saw the doctor, and while the presence of German sentinels discouraged conversation the old gentleman found a way of giving a gruesome suggestion of the plight in which he found himself by raising his hand to the position assumed by one who aims a gun; he dropped his head

over the imagined stock, shut his left eye and gave a too realistic "Tschk!" with his tongue as he pulled the imagined trigger. Having thus dramatized the fate he anticipated, he was taken away the next morning to Hasselt, the very sound of which connoted tragedy. . . .

And Vernon Kellogg was going away. I have been rich in friendships in my life and have been shown a great deal of kindness by those who generously, in my case, have taken the will for the deed and the promise for the performance. I had formed many friendships in Brussels. I could feel as though surrounded with affection and regard, and

> I count myself in nothing else so happy
> As in a soul remembering my good friends.

But there was something in Vernon Kellogg, which I shall not limit by any attempt at definition, that made me like him, so that I was peculiarly sad at his going. The University of Stanford, an unwritten book or something, was calling him. It had been such a comfort to have him there; he got on well with everybody, with the Belgians, with the Germans, with all the others, this slender man with the smiling, humorous countenance, this gentleman and scholar.

Already I was lonesome in his going. October 17 was a day of a dull sky that grew very dark as the afternoon wore on. The laggard guns sounded louder than ever, as if to show that while they could not advance, they could make more noise, reiterate their one and only argument in a deeper, heavier voice. Kellogg and I were playing truant: we had agreed to meet at Ravenstein to lunch alone and talk about the things of a world that once had been, of a world we sometimes feared could never be again. He came driving up to the terrace, and the smile he usually wore was gone from his pleasant countenance; in its place was the adumbration of evil tidings. And then he told me:

In Flanders the Germans had forcibly seized between twelve and fourteen hundred working men and carried them off to Germany to toil in the mines.

I remembered then the speech of Hellfrisch in the Reichstag a few days before, in which he had declared that the time had come when the Empire must force the men in the occupied territories to work. And I recalled the repeated conferences with

reference to the *chômeurs*, that incessant preoccupation of the Germans, a subject to which they had returned again and again with the nagging persistence that characterized them; once they had an idea in their heads there was no way of dislodging it.

I was hardly surprised; not that I expected precisely this, but the Germans had tried every other means they could think of to compel the *chômeurs* to work, and as they put all their trust in force they were not patient in argument or discussion—a waste of time, they felt, if one has the power to take what one wants.

And I recalled Hindenburg's quarrel with Bissing; the new policy was coincidental with the coming of Hindenburg to the Western Front; it was the work of *Messieurs les militaires* and they gloried in it openly, the firstfruits of the policy which was to teach Belgium "what war is," as the threat had been at the time of Hindenburg's visit. The policy had not as yet been applied to the Occupationgebiet; Von Bissing was said to be opposed to it, and Von der Lancken had gone to Berlin to induce the Government, if possible, not to apply such measures to their jurisdiction.

At our bi-weekly meeting the next afternoon we talked of little else than the deportations, to employ the euphemism by which the slave-drive became known. Dr. Kellogg by that time had details, based on the reports of the delegates of the C.R.B., who had just come into Brussels for their weekly meeting. Demands to work for the German army were being made on unemployed, and even on employed men, not only in the Belgian Etappen, but in the territory of the General Government itself, as in Luxembourg and in the Hainaut. In Luxembourg the Germans had issued orders that certain public works undertaken by the Belgian provincial and communal authorities, in order to provide work for the unemployed, be discontinued, and further orders were given to the effect that the men thus thrown out of work were not to be employed by private persons. The men had then been invited by the German military authorities to work for them, and when they refused they had been seized by force. Men had been taken thus at Liége, Dinant, and Verviers. Thus, despite the Governor-General, and before Lancken could get to Berlin, the policy was already in vogue in the Occupationgebiet.

In Tournai demands to work for the military authorities had been made on large numbers of men, who, when they refused,

had been interned in prison camps and put on bread and water. The relief organization had been ordered to issue bread to them, but bread only; it was not allowed to provide any other part of the regular ration, such as bacon, lard, rice, peas, and beans. Besides, numerous demands were made by the military authorities on the local committees of the relief organization for lists of *chômeurs*, the expressed intention being to use these lists as a means of determining what men should be impressed for labour in the service of the German army; and local civil authorities who had refused to give these lists had already been arrested and deported to Germany. These acts constituted an infraction of the undertaking with regard to the forcing of labour, not only the undertaking in The Hague Conventions—no one ever thought of citing them any more—but of the undertaking in regard to the *ravitaillement*. If the Comité National and the Commission for Relief in Belgium should accept this situation without protest they would be acquiescing in an indirect infraction of the agreement between the Governor-General and the Protecting Ministers, and, by the limitation of the food ration, would even be a party to the punishment of these Belgian men.

This then was the *dénouement*, the end of all those efforts put forth by the Germans and so often frustrated, to inquire into the charity distributed by the Comité National, and to obtain the lists of those to whom it was given—the *chômeurs*.

It was not difficult to imagine the effect of such proceedings on the *ravitaillement*; the next courier from England would bring a demand that either the deportations or the *ravitaillement* cease. And then? It was a sober and discouraged group that met that afternoon, but we could do no more just then than to await Von der Lancken's return from Berlin in the hope, not very strong, that he would bring some sort of good news, and in the more likely event that the news was bad, to prepare to protest.

The press-gang was not a new institution in the zone of operations. It had been at work, in principle, as early as June 1915, in Lille, in Roubaix, and in Tourcoing, where the civilians had been forced to make sacks for use in the trenches. The correspondence between the Mayor of Lille and the German commander had been given to me, and nothing could place in opposition more strikingly the two mentalities involved in

conflict.* More than a hundred men, mayors and leading manufacturers of that industrial centre of the north of France,

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* LILLE, *le* 18 *juin* 1915.

Extrait du rapport de la Section de Transport du 16 *avril* 1915

No. 1142. AU GOUVERNEMENT

Jusqu'à présent la fabrication de sacs à sable se faisait sans empêchement depuis des mois; il y a environ 4 semaines que pour la première fois se montraient dans la population des efforts de retenir les ouvriers et ouvrières qui sont employés dans la maison Couzineau par des menaces. Elles n'eurent tout d'abord aucun résultat, même quelques autres fabriques s'étaient déterminées à travailler, de sorte que ces derniers temps, environ 230,000 sacs avaient été confectionnés journellement.

L'agitation paraît cependant avoir continué et a amené 5 fabriques sur 7 qui se trouvaient en activité à arrêter le travail faute de main-d'œuvre.

Comme on paie pour la fabrication d'un sac 7 centimes de salaire la dépense pour les 3 millions 800,000 sacs encore à livrer se monterait à 266,000 fr., qui devraient être payés par la ville de Lille, si elle ne réussissait pas à déterminer es ouvriers à reprendre le travail.

STALM.
Pour copie conforme,
SODING, *Capitaine.*

Translation

LILLE, *June* 18, 1915.

Extract of the Report of the Transport Section of April 16, 1915.

No. 1142. TO THE GOVERNMENT

Up to the present time the manufacture of sandbags has been carried out without difficulty for several months; but about four weeks ago, for the first time, efforts were observed in the population to restrain the working men and working women who are employed in the Couzineau factory by menaces. These efforts at first had no result; even several other factories decided to work, so that lately nearly 230,000 sacks have been made daily.

However, the agitation appears to have continued, and to have induced five factories out of seven which still were active to stop work because of the lack of working men.

As seven centimes are paid for the fabrication of each sack, the expenditure for the 3,800,000 sacks still to be delivered would amount to 266,000 francs, which must be paid by the city of Lille if it does not succeed in inducing the workers to resume their labour.

STALM.
A certified copy,
SODING, *Captain.*

Gouvernement de Lille,
J. No. 14790. LILLE, *le* 18 *juin* 1915.

[*Copie à retourner*]

Au MAIRE DE LILLE

Il est déclaré au Maire ce qui suit:

(*a*) Le Maire doit user de toute son influence pour déterminer les gens à reprendre le travail.

Pour garantir les ouvriers contre les désagréments après conclusion de la paix, le gouvernement est prêt à leur délivrer un certificat constatant qu'ils ont été forcés au travail.

(*b*) Pour le cas où le 22 juin le travail n'était pas repris, la confection des sacs à sable sera donnée à la ville.

(*c*) Si même ceci n'atteignait pas le but, les toiles réquisitionnées seront

had been arrested and sent to Germany for having refused to aid the Germans in their press; I knew of a retired manufacturer,

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envoyées en Allemagne, y seront travaillées et réexpédiées ici aux frais de la ville.

Je me réserve en outre d'imposer à la ville une contribution en amende.

(*d*) Il sera procédé sévèrement contre les instigateurs.

VON HEINRICH.
Pour copie conforme,
SODING, *Capitaine.*

Translation

Government of Lille,
J. No. 14790. LILLE, *June* 18, 1915.

[*Copy to be returned*]

To THE MAYOR OF LILLE

The Mayor will take notice of that which follows:

(*a*) The Mayor will use his influence to induce people to resume work.

In order to guarantee the workers against difficulties after the conclusion of peace, the Government is willing to deliver to them a certificate stating that they have been forced to work.

(*b*) In case that work is not resumed by June 22, the work of making the sacks will be given to the city.

(*c*) If this does not attain its end, the canvas requisitioned will be sent to Germany to be made there and returned here at the expense of the city.

I may also find it necessary to impose a fine on the city.

(*d*) The instigators will be dealt with severely.

VON HEINRICH.
A certified copy,
SODING, *Captain.*

LILLE, *le* 19 *juin* 1915.

LE MAIRE DE LILLE *à* MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR DE LILLE

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR,—M. le Général de Graevenitz m'a transmis hier soir la copie de votre lettre relative aux ouvriers qui confectionnent les sacs à sable pour les tranchées.

Vous me dites qu'une certaine agitation dont l'écho n'est même pas venu jusqu'à moi, règne à ce sujet dans la population ouvrière, et tend à paralyser le travail.

Vous me demandez en conséquence, "d'user de toute mon influence pour déterminer les gens à reprendre le travail."

Je regrette devoir vous faire respectueusement remarquer qu'il m'est impossible d'entrer dans vos désirs.

Obliger un ouvrier ou un patron à travailler est absolument contraire à mon droit; lui conseiller de travailler, absolument contraire à mon devoir, que me dicte impérieusement l'art. 52 de la Convention de La Haye.

Vous avez reconnu vous-même la justesse de mes observations lorsqu'il s'est agi, au début de l'occupation, de trouver des ouvriers pour les tranchées et vous n'avez pas insisté pour que je m'y entremette. Ce sont les mêmes raisons que j'invoque aujourd'hui.

Quant à la solution que vous proposez de donner à la ville elle-même le soin de confectionner les sacs, elle ne peut même pas être envisagée, car mon devoir de Maire français me l'interdit plus formellement encore.

Quelque risque personnel que je puisse encourir, je regrette donc ne pouvoir vous donner satisfaction.

Vous êtes soldat, Excellence, vous placez trop haut le sentiment du devoir

who had had a factory at Roubaix, who was locked up in a bathroom for twelve days—he was ill at the time—simply

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pour vouloir exiger que je trahisse le mien. Si j'agissais autrement, vous n'auriez pour moi au fond de vous-même que du mépris.

Veuillez agréer, Excellence, mes civilités.

Le Marie de Lille,
CH. DELESALLE.

Translation

LILLE, *June* 19, 1915.

THE MAYOR OF LILLE *to* THE GOVERNOR OF LILLE

MR. GOVERNOR,—General von Graevenitz transmitted to me yesterday evening the copy of your letter relating to the workers who are making sandbags for the trenches.

You say to me that a certain agitation, of which the echo even has not reached me, exists among the population and has a tendency to paralyse work.

You ask me in consequence to use all my influence in order to induce the people to resume work.

I regret to be compelled respectfully to ask you to note that it is impossible for me to meet your desire.

To oblige a workman or an employer to work is absolutely contrary to my right; to counsel him to work is absolutely contrary to my duty, which is imperiously dictated to me by article 52 of The Hague Convention.

You recognized yourself the justness of my observations when, at the beginning of the occupation, it was a question of finding workmen for the trenches, and you did not insist that I should interfere in that. I invoke the same reasons to-day.

As to the solution which you propose, that is, to impose on the city itself the task of making the sacks, it cannot even be considered because my duty as a French mayor forbids it still more formally.

Whatever personal risk I may run, I regret, then, not to be able to give you satisfaction.

You are a soldier, Excellency; you place too high the sentiment of duty to wish to compel me to betray my own. If I did otherwise, you would have only contempt for me in your heart.

I pray you to accept, Excellency, my compliments.

The Mayor of Lille,
CH. DELESALLE.

Kommandantur, Lille,
8843.

LILLE, *le* 20 *juin* 1915,
3 h. 30 (allemande).

À MONSIEUR LE MAIRE DE LILLE

Son Excellence Monsieur le Gouverneur a retiré aux otages de la ville de Lille leur faveur jusqu'à nouvel avis. Le nécessaire doit donc être fait, pour que 5 otages se trouvent tous les jours, à 7 h. du soir, à la Citadelle, pour y rester jusqu'à 7 h. du matin.

L'appel doit se faire *aujourd'hui* le 20, VI, 1915, à la Citadelle à 9 heures.

Son Excellence le Gouverneur répondra à part à la lettre du Maire.

VON GRAEVENITZ.

Translation

Kommandantur of Lille,
8843.

LILLE, *June* 20, 1915,
3.30 (German time).

To THE MAYOR OF LILLE

His Excellency the Governor has withdrawn from the hostages of the city of Lille the favours accorded to them, until further orders. The necessary steps

because he refused to use his "moral influence" to compel his former employés to work.

Thus, first in the Operationsgebiet, then spreading to the Etappengebiet, and now in the Occupationgebiet, it began, this kidnapping, this shanghaing, this crimping, this slaving, in those remote and obscure hamlets which knew so many more horrors than the cities because there the Feldwebels and under-officers were supreme, under no supervising eye, and since in the German

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must be taken then for five hostages to report every day at 7 o'clock in the evening at the Citadel, and to remain there until 7 o'clock in the morning.

The roll will be called to-day, June 20, at the Citadel at 9 o'clock.

His Excellency the Governor will reply separately to the Mayor's letter.

VON GRAEVENITZ.

Gouvernement de Lille. LILLE, *le 20 juin* 1915.

À MONSIEUR LE MAIRE DE LILLE

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 19 juin, dans laquelle vous me dites que vous n'aviez point le droit de forcer un ouvrier au travail, et qu'il était contraire à votre devoir de lui conseiller d'exécuter les travaux désirés par le Gouvernement, comme étant en contradiction avec la convention de La Haye.

Je n'ai nullement voulu que vous usiez de contrainte envers les ouvriers; j'ai plutôt espéré que vous ouvririez une voie de conciliation pour protéger la ville et les ouvriers contre des désagréments!

Je ne saurais nullement partager votre opinion que la confection des sacs soit contradictoire au paragraphe 52 de l'accord du 18 octobre 1907. Je vous invite de nouveau à insister auprès des patrons et des ouvriers; je suis convaincu que la plupart des ouvriers ne demandent pas mieux que de pouvoir gagner leur vie.

Au cas où le 22 juin à 10 heures du matin le travail ne sera pas repris, je me verrai obligé de prendre des mesures plus rigoureuses.

La faveur que j'ai accordée aux otages de la ville, je l'ai fait cesser à partir d'aujourd'hui. Cinq otages devront passer la nuit à la Citadelle depuis 7 heures du soir à 7 heures du matin, jusqu'à la reprise de la confection des sacs.

VON HEINRICH.

Translation

Government of Lille. LILLE, *June* 20, 1915.

To THE MAYOR OF LILLE

I have received your letter of June 19, in which you tell me that you have not the right to force a workman to work, and that it is against your duty to counsel him to execute the work desired by the Government, as being in contradiction with The Hague Convention.

I have never wished that you should use any coercion to the workmen. I rather hoped that you would obtain a way of conciliation to protect the city and the workmen against trouble.

I can in nowise share your opinion that the manufacture of sandbags is contrary to paragraph 52 of the agreement of October 18, 1907. I ask you again to insist to the employers and to the employés. I am convinced that the greater part of the workmen will ask nothing better than to be able to earn their livelihood.

If by June 22 at 10 o'clock in the morning work is not resumed, I shall be obliged to take the most rigorous measures.

The favour that I have accorded to the hostages of the city I put an end to from to-day. Five hostages will have to pass the night in the Citadel, from

system there are no equals, but only superiors and inferiors, so that every man is cowering before the man above him and bullying the man below, they could work their brutal and irresponsible will as they chose. Prowling thus in far and hidden corners of the land they pounced upon their helpless prey, rounding slowly, stealthily in on the larger cities, reserving Brussels and Antwerp to the last.

The stories of the seizures, with details of a cruelty and

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7 o'clock in the evening to 7 o'clock in the morning, until the manufacture of the sandbags is resumed.

VON HEINRICH.

le 21 *juin* 1915.

LE MAIRE DE LILLE *à* MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR VON HEINRICH, LILLE

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR,—Je reçois votre lettre de ce jour, et m'empresse d'y répondre, je ne puis que vous confirmer ma lettre du 19.

Depuis plus de huit mois je crois avoir fait preuve du plus grand esprit de conciliation, et vous n'hésiterez pas, je l'espère, à reconnaître la loyauté parfaite que j'ai apportée dans mes rapports avec l'autorité occupante.

Les ouvriers qui travaillent dans les tranchées " prennent part aux opérations de la guerre contre leur Patrie." Je n'ai pourtant jamais cherché à les en empêcher, estimant que chacun de mes concitoyens ne relève que de sa propre conscience.

Mais quand il s'agit de mon devoir personel, il n'y a pas de conciliation ni de transaction possible. Mon devoir dans la circonstance est tellement net que je ne pourrais m'y soustraire sans forfaire à l'Honneur.

Vous me dites que si le travail n'est pas repris demain, des punitions rigoureuses seront infligées à la ville.

Pourquoi voulez-vous rendre responsable une immense population innocente, et ne pas exercer vos rigueurs contre celui-là seul qui assume et accepte les responsabilités de ses actes ?

Veuillez agréer, Excellence, mes civilités.

LE MAIRE DE LILLE.

Translation

June 21, 1915.

THE MAYOR OF LILLE *to* THE GOVERNOR VON HEINRICH, LILLE

MR. GOVERNOR,—I receive your letter of this day, and I hasten to reply to it. I can only confirm my letter of the 19th.

For more than eight months I have tried to give proof of the largest spirit of conciliation, and you will not hesitate, I hope, to recognize the perfect fairness that I have shown in my dealings with the occupying authority.

The working men who work in the trenches are "taking part in the operations of war against their country." I have never, however, tried to prevent them from so doing, feeling that each one of my fellow-citizens has to obey only his own conscience.

But where there is a question of my personal duty there is no conciliation and no discussion possible. My duty in the circumstances is so clear that I cannot escape it without forfeiting my honour.

You tell me that if the work is not resumed to-morrow rigorous punishment will be inflicted on the city. Why do you wish to render responsible a whole innocent population, and not exercise your rigours against him who alone assumes and accepts responsibility for his acts ?

I beg you to accept, Excellency, my compliments.

THE MAYOR OF LILLE.

brutality the like of which one could recall only vaguely out of the memory of tales, long since read, of slave-drivers in the African jungle, came up to Brussels from the provinces, and after the first dazed incomprehension, the early scepticism, there was a rage and indignation far beyond that produced by the earlier atrocities. These, as I have said, had seemed to be accepted by the people in a kind of dumb fatalism, as they might have accepted some terrible cataclysm in nature. But this deed, with its monstrous and cynical cruelty, perpetrated upon a cultivated people, in the year of Our Lord 1916, at a moment in the history of the world when, despite all its disillusions, it believed human slavery no longer possible on any of its continents, created a rage that was black, implacable, remorseless, a hatred that found its savage intensity deep down in the primeval instincts of the race. I had never imagined, much less seen, any human emotion comparable to it; I hope never to have to look upon the like again. It transformed the faces of men I knew; they grew hard, dark, stony, until a livid hue of passion informed them, and then their eyes blazed, their jaws were set, and they could find no words to express their loathing of this foulest deed committed by man, or that hatred of the men who committed it.

"*L'esclavage!*" they would say, with a harsh, rasping voice.

"*L'esclavage!*" And they would repeat:

"*L'esclavage!*"

And sometimes tears would start to their eyes, tears at their own impotence in the passionate and terrible longing for revenge.

XXX. TO ASSASSINATE A NATION'S SOUL

Von Bissing was just then maturing a plan over which he had long been brooding, a plan more audacious, more far-reaching, more imaginative, and more noxious in its effect on the life of the Belgian nation than the slave-drive of the military power impersonated by Von Hindenburg. The Von Bissing plan showed a certain finesse, it was no mere recrudescence of mediævalism, no reversion to the ancient type. Both men wished to carry out the imperial German scheme of conquering and annexing Belgium in order to have a foothold whence Germany might strike at England and America. Hindenburg, heavy and ponderous, could

think of nothing more original than to drag Belgians off into slavery, after the manner of conquerors in ancient times. But Bissing, old, wily, subtle, had a deeper scheme, the sequel of the inauguration of the Flemish University at Ghent; by an adroit appeal to the old racial feeling between the Flemish and the Walloons, he would divide the Belgian nation; he would give his policy the appearance of a spontaneous and generous act undertaken in the name of the very principle for which the Allies were fighting, the right of small nations to govern themselves. He would stand by benevolently, holding out a patronizing and protecting hand, while the Flemish set up for themselves the Flemish State under a German protectorate, and in this way gain Antwerp and the Belgian littoral, the foothold on the sea, menacing the virile democracies of the British Isles and the American continent. This daring and ambitious scheme, with its imperial vision, never had any chance of success, because Bissing did not understand the Flemish people, but he did apprehend the fact that whatever chance his scheme may have had was destroyed at a blow by the savage policy of the burly hero into whose enormous wooden statue the Germans, like savages with some fetish or totem-pole, were enthusiastically driving nails.

Von Bissing, having studied "The Prince," was already dramatizing himself amid the acclamations and the enthusiastic *Hochs!* of a posterity that would hail him as the first dictator of Belgium and as the man who had annexed it to the Empire, when Hindenburg, coming to the Western Front, ruined all his careful plans by his stubborn and impetuous will! And he had to swallow his chagrin and go off to Ghent, and there, on October 21, to open the new Flemish University by a speech in which he sought to flatter the pride of the Flemish people.

It must have been a bitter and ironical moment for the old satrap who was trying to rule his province with a pretence of paternal concern, to think that at the very moment when, posing as the patron of learning and of art, and the saviour of the Flemish people, he was delivering an address in opening the Flemish University at Ghent, he could catch the strains of "The Lion of Flanders" sung by the Flemish workmen whom the stupid *militaires* were dragging off into slavery, leaving behind them in the land he was trying to conquer a hatred for the very

word German—*Duitch*—that would burn as long as there was memory in Flanders.

Baron von der Lancken returned from Berlin with the result that we had expected; there was nothing to be done. The German military authorities were stubbornly determined to go through with it at all hazards, even if it put an end to the *ravitaillement.*

That week, for the second time since the slave-drive had begun, the delegates of the C.R.B. came in from the provinces for their regular meeting, shaken by the scenes they had witnessed. Tuck, Richardson, and Osborn came to tell me of it. Tuck had stood on the bridge at Mons and watched long trains of cattle-cars, many of them open to the sky, pass under it, filled with Belgian miners going into slavery and singing "La Brabançonne" and "La Marseillaise" as they went. The people, gathered in crowds on the bridge, flung down to them turnips, potatoes, anything and all they had; the men seized these raw vegetables and ate them ravenously, like animals. The crowd joined in their cries, the single German sentinel on the bridge running about meanwhile and imploring them to be still. Every one of the delegates had some such tale to tell; they were half sick with the horror of it, but they had rendered all the help they could, even when that help was only the sympathy they could not refrain from expressing. We determined on a protest, and formally asked for an interview with Von der Lancken.

It was on Friday, October 27, a day of cold rain and wet leaves falling dismally, that we went to discuss it. At five o'clock in the afternoon at the Politische Abteilung, the Marquis of Villalobar, M. van Vollenhoven, M. Francqui, M. Emmanuel Janssen, and I met the Baron von der Lancken and Dr. Brohn and Dr. Reith, of the Vermittlungstelle. Before taking up the question of the deportations, Von der Lancken, opening the meeting in his formal way, asked Dr. Reith to read us a letter just written by the Governor-General and addressed to the Protecting Ministers, according what we had asked at our latest interview with him, representation on the various Zentralen, and a more stringent control. The letter was satisfactory to us, and then we made our formal protest against the deportations, and the Baron said that he would define the attitude of the General Government in regard to the question.

It was very still in the little *salon*; Von der Lancken, sitting by the marble-topped table, undeniably handsome in his uniform of delicate blue-grey, began his reply by saying that in Germany the old men and the women and the children were working in the fields, while in Belgium there were seven hundred thousand idle folk, more than half of them men; for the most part young and capable of working. His Excellency the Governor-General had twice, publicly and officially, offered work to the *chômeurs*, but it had been refused; now, because of the lack of labour (*le manque de main-d'œuvre*) in Germany the General Government was determined to force these Belgians to go to work. The General Government, he said, felt that it had not only the legal but the moral right to do this; that idleness was always a menace, and that if the war continued a year or two longer these men would lose the habit of work completely (*ils perdront complètement l'habitude de travailler*). They would, therefore, be transferred to Germany —some ten thousand had already been sent—and there they would be set to work in the fields, in the quarries, and elsewhere, but not one of them would be compelled to work for the army or for any military purpose whatever.

He paused a moment, with a wide, exculpating gesture as of one who admits some trifling exception, and said:

"*Je ne dis pas que pas un seul ne travaillera à un rail sur lequel un train militaire passera—mais . . .*"

The decision had been made, he added, and—there would be no rescinding of it. Dr. Brohn, who was a director in the Krupp Works, remarked that there were hundreds of Belgians working in the Krupp Works, but not in the munitions department. But, said one of us, Belgians had been set to work making trenches in Northern France. But this the Baron denied; no Belgian, he said, had been employed at such labour save those who had come voluntarily and asked for work, though he did admit that some of them had been employed on the new fortifications at Antwerp.

Villalobar and I by turns called the Baron's attention to the storm that the reports of the seizures would produce in the world outside, and asked him if they had considered the effect the measure would have on the *ravitaillement*. The Baron replied that the Comité National and the Commission for Relief would be respected, and the engagements entered into with them would

be kept. The Governor had not and would not ask the Comité National for the lists of *chômeurs*.

Then we called his attention to the state of affairs in the province of Luxembourg, where there were no *chômeurs*; the communes had undertaken public works in order to provide employment; they had begun to build roads, bridges, town halls, ditches—any justifiable improvement that might lighten the needs of the people. But the German civil president had ordered all this construction to be discontinued; he had even gone so far as to prohibit workmen living in one commune to go into neighbouring communes in search of work. Dr. Reith replied for the Baron, saying that these public works had been undertaken after the Germans had called for workmen, which was doubtless accurate enough, since the Germans had begun calling for workmen almost as soon as the occupation began, and that the Belgian authorities had inaugurated these works in order to defeat the German plan to secure manual labour.

It was a long and futile discussion; one after another we brought up all the objections that so readily occurred to the mind, but to no avail. There was once more that impregnable impasse, that magic phrase—military necessity; *Messieurs les militaires* had pronounced it, and that closured all debate: Baron von der Lancken shrugged his shoulders to show that he was powerless, and besides, he had not been in favour of the policy. . . . The discussion went on, was interminable, and at last despairing. There we sat, while the evening closed in, perplexed by the difficulty the modern mind experiences when suddenly called upon to establish any elementary and universally admitted principle, something long accepted as axiomatic; as that the earth is round, that tides are coincident with the phases of the moon, that there is a law of gravity, that liberty is a right, that human slavery is wrong—Villalobar, quiet in a wide fauteuil close to the little table with the marble top, playing with the *dossier* he always had before him, picking up and letting fall the papers of his numerous affairs; Dr. Reith, the only one of the Germans in civilian clothes, wearing an extraordinarily high collar; Dr. Brohn, a big, mild, agreeable man, in the dark blue uniform of the 2nd Alexandria Regiment, caught in the cogs of the terrible German machine; Van Vollenhoven, ruddy, taciturn; Emmanuel Janssen in scrupulous black, with never a word to say; M.

Francqui, sitting sidewise in his chair, one short, fat leg crossed over the other, nervously smoking cigarette after cigarette, his eloquent dark eyes darting here and there their brilliant glances, which nothing, not even the shadow of an expression, ever escaped; and Lancken, with his air of youth, trim, well-groomed, in his uniform of delicate blue-grey, his black hair clipped short and carefully brushed, his blue eyes fixed on the sheet of paper on his knees, the faint adumbration of an enigmatic smile about his lips. It was still in the *salon* when suddenly M. Francqui, with a nervous movement, uncrossed his legs, turned restlessly in his chair, crossed his legs again, and exclaimed, as if to himself:

"*Nous sommes des nègres!*" His dark eyes were flashing, and over the face of Baron von der Lancken there swept a scarlet flame; he turned quickly and exclaimed:

"*Non, je ne peux pas permettre que vous disiez cela!*"

Then silence again, very deep; a vast weariness of a common recognition of the whole impossible situation, of the madness and horror of the war. Villalobar sighed heavily; the sigh was audible all over the *salon*, and, turning wearily toward the Baron, he said:

"*Cette guerre dure trop longtemps; vous et l'Angleterre devriez y mettre fin.*"

The words wrung suddenly from Von der Lancken a human cry:

"*Cette guerre abominable doit cesser!*" he cried, striking his knee with a clenched fist. "*Nous sommes prêts! Pourquoi les autres ne veulent-ils pas la paix aussi?*"

There was an instant, the only one, no doubt, in all the hours of all the difficult discussions we had had in that gay little yellow Louis XVI *salon*, with its closed piano, its chairs with the satin cushions wearing out by unwonted usage, its mirrors that had reflected so many strange and varied forms and features, when we were in accord. . . .

The discussion was fraying out into those vain and idle repetitions that mark the end of most conferences; some one, Villalobar, I believe, asked Lancken to state once more the official German position with regard to the *ravitaillement*—he had already stated it five or six times—and the Baron, emphasizing each word with a blow of his fist on his knee, said:

"*Nous restons et nous resterons dans nos droits; nous respectons*

et nous respecterons nos engagements ; nous ne toucherons en rien au Comité National."

That was all; the meeting was over, and we sat there, benumbed by the conviction, the absolute and disheartening certainty, that all argument, all discussion, all reason, all appeal, was useless. Lancken had no power; he was engaged in the impossible task of presenting the deeds of the *Reiters* and *hobereaux* under a light that would somehow reconcile them with the ideals of Western liberal culture, apprehended by him in his ten years at Paris; even Bissing, the Governor-General, whom all Belgium cursed and execrated, whose name was anathema, the old man who stood to Britain and to France and to America as the very sign and symbol of all that was abominable in German theory and practice, even he had not been severe enough to suit the General Staff. There was but one argument that could impress the military power, and that was a knock on the head. I had come a long way and reluctantly to a conclusion so utterly at variance with all I had thought and dreamed for years. I had learned that there was but one hope, one salvation for the world, one hope and one salvation for the German people themselves, and that was that the military caste of Germany be defeated and passed under the yoke—literally; it was the only thing that they could understand.

The result of this formal protest, like the effect of information we had received in several private causeries, was the conviction that if any representations could avail they would have to be made at Berlin. In these circumstances I could only report the facts to Washington, and venture to suggest that some action be taken at Berlin, where the power, if there was any power in Germany higher than the General Staff, alone resided. My course was approved and the suggestion adopted. Mr. Gerard had gone home, and Mr. Grew was in charge at Berlin, and I sent him all the facts upon which to base a representation, and suggested to Mr. Grew that in case protests, appeals, or representations should fail to stop the hideous thing, some policy at least be adopted by the Germans, that if the pretence of seizing only *chômeurs* were observed it would be something, and that if certain classes of exemptions could be created, such as would include married men or heads of families, or only men apt for military service, or some such thing, it might somewhat ameliorate the situation.

I suggested also that the camps in Germany be open to inspection by representatives of our Embassy there, or, since Spain was in charge of Belgian interests at Berlin, to the representatives of the Spanish Embassy.

November came, cold and gloomy, with the bells tolling on All Saints' Day for the dead; the bells in the ancient little chapel of Stalle, behind the Orangerie, clanged dismally all day long. There were long, woebegone processions in black, winding toward the cemeteries, and there were thoughts of the dead in those new graves all over Belgium and down along the Yser; thoughts, too, of all those who were being herded by the slavers to living tombs in German mines and quarries.

The Kelloggs were about to depart; Mr. Warren Gregory, the lawyer of San Francisco, had arrived to succeed Mr. Kellogg at the most difficult moment in the history of the *ravitaillement*. Mr. Hoover had come over from London to discuss with M. Francqui an internal problem of organization of great difficulty and delicacy, and for days that discussion went on, with frequent references of its details to me. It was a trying week, and in addition to the trouble in which it was so prolific there was the uncertainty of the election at home. One morning Harrach sent me word from the Politische Abteilung to the effect that Judge Hughes had been elected. Two days later, he sent word that the result was in doubt, and then, the slowly emerging fact that the President's course had been vindicated by the people.

Baron von der Lancken had gone to Berlin again. He was about two days, and immediately on his return (November 11) I had a long conversation with him, in which he said that through one of the representatives of the Vermittlungstelle who had seen Mr. Hoover, he had heard that it had been suggested that the Belgian camps in Germany be open to American or neutral visitation and inspection; he said that he was heartily in favour of the suggestion, and wished to know if it had emanated from the American Government, or from Mr. Hoover, or from me. I told him that since we were living in a world where every one seemed to be much concerned about the credit of a thing than about the thing itself, I wished no one to be deprived of what was his; the idea was Mr. Hoover's, unless it were Villalobar's, for Mr. Hoover had mentioned it to me after a conversation with Villalobar. It was, indeed, the idea of Mr. Hoover, who was still in

Brussels, and indignant over the deportations, and Lancken said he would telegraph at once to urge it on his Government's consideration. I said, too, that bad as the whole policy was it would perhaps be less evil if there were some principle in its application, and I told him of the indiscriminate seizures that were being made all over the Hainaut and Brabant. The Baron said that they could not distinguish between *chômeurs* and *non-chômeurs* because they had not the lists. I replied that, of course, the Comité National could not give up the lists.

"*Mon Dieu, non!*" he said, lifting his hands with an ironical gesture as if of pious horror. "*Le Comité National est sacro-saint.*"

There were the burgomasters, too, but without my having to remind him, he realized that they could not give up the lists.

"*Ils seraient lynchés,*" he said.

I asked whether, if we were to bring to his notice cases of what might be called injustice under the German policy as he had defined it, such as seizures of men who were employed, they would be considered and rectified, and he replied that they would. It was agreed that all Belgians employed either by the C.N. or by the C.R.B. should be exempt. Beyond this, which was so little, the Baron's visit to Berlin had been rather barren of results.

We were sitting in the little upper room where he worked; it was a chill, autumn day, but the small stove burning furiously made the room somewhat too *gemütlich*. We talked long that morning, and I told the Baron that the policy of deportation would create horror and a furore of indignation in America, and indeed everywhere in the world outside. The Baron said that the Governor-General was preparing an interview to be given to an American journalist for the purpose of explaining the deportations to the American people, and for the purpose of affecting public opinion. There was a copy of *La Libre Belgique* on his table, the latest number to appear, and he pointed out in it to me an article which contained an appeal to neutral countries, and especially to the neutral countries then represented at Brussels.

"*Ils tapent sur vous!*" he said

And then he asked:

"*Est-ce qu'on doit vous féliciter des élections? Est-ce Wilson ou non?*"

I could only tell him that I had no accurate news, and he rummaged through the newspaper file on his little table and found and read an Associated Press dispatch which said that the President had two hundred and seventy-seven votes and was elected; and then he asked me many questions about the system by which our presidents are chosen, and I explained it, as I had to explain it so many times and to so many persons; it was then a mystery to Europe, like so many other things in our America!

The Belgians had somehow acquired the impression that the national conventions in June had decided that question; they thought Mr. Hughes had then been elected to succeed President Wilson, and the recrudescence, as it seemed to them, of political discussion on the other side of the sea confused and puzzled them. They would say to me:

"*Mais, je pensais que Monsieur 'Ugue'*"—as they pronounced Hughes—"*a déjà été élu?*"

It was a result, or at least the defeat of the President was a result, for which the Germans, as some of them did not hesitate to say, were hoping.

XXXI. THE DEPORTATIONS

By one of those ironies that are so implicit and so inevitable in the scheme of things that they must affect the purely philosophic observer of life as monotonous, the winter came on very early that year of the deportations, and was the most severe that Belgium had ever known. In November it was already cold, a cold the more bitter because of the humidity of the Low Countries. Fuel was scarce; the Germans were taking great quantities of coal from the mines down in the Borinage; they controlled the railways, and as they used all the wagons to carry their troops to the front, or the *chômeurs* and coal to Germany, the barges on the canals were the only remaining means of transport, and before November was gone the canals were frozen over, the barges could not move, and coal for use of the Belgian population could not be brought to Brussels. One of the saddest sights of those sad times was that presented to me one cold morning as, in my selfish furs, I drove along the boulevard; the tramway had been torn up and working men were putting in ballast—

some sort of slag or cinder, or what one will. Along those tracks for two blocks women and children were clustered like flies in a black, solid mass along the tramway, bent over with bags or baskets, grubbing with their half-frozen fingers for tiny bits of coal. It was one of those humiliating spectacles, not infrequent in times of peace, but abounding in time of war, of the indignity that life heaps upon the poor.

It happened to be the day of King Albert's fête, and there were the usual Masses at Ste.-Gudule and at St.-Jacques-sur-Caudenberg, the usual crowds, "Vers l'Avenir," its last chords gliding into "La Brabançonne," then swelling loudly and more loudly, then the demonstration, the shouts, the cries for the King and the nation, and the usual arrests. The Germans were parading their *mitrailleuses* to cow the restless people, angered that day more than ever by the publication in the Brussels journals of a French translation of Von Bissing's interview with the correspondent of the *New York Times*, in which, as Lancken had predicted, he explained and tried to justify the deportations.* The interview was in the conventional tone of hypocrisy, though

* LA QUESTION DES CHÔMEURS

Le correspondant berlinois du *New York Times* a interviewé S.E. le Baron von Bissing, Gouverneur général en Belgique. En commentaire de cette interview, la *Gazette de l'Allemagne du Nord* publie un long article. On sait l'empressement que nous mettons à placer sous les yeux de nos lecteurs, à qui par-dessus tout la documentation est nécessaire à cette heure pour apprécier raisonnablement les événements, les écrits officiels ou officieux desquels peut ressortir une saine appréciation des faits. C'est dans cet esprit que nous reproduisons ci-dessous l'article de la *Gazette de l'Allemagne du Nord :* il a trait à une question qui préoccupe au plus haut point en ce moment tous les Belges, et pour cette raison sera lu par tous avec intérêt.

Par suite de l'étranglement économique de la Belgique, dont l'Angleterre se charge sans aucun égard pour celle-ci, plus d'un million de Belges appauvris, hommes, femmes et enfants, voient aujourd'hui leur existence dépendre de la bienfaisance publique. En supprimant l'importation des matières et en interdisant l'exportation des produits finis, l'Angleterre a condamné près de 500,000 ouvriers belges à un état chronique d'inactivité qui les démoralise. Eux et leurs familles sont aujourd'hui à la charge des communes. Pour mettre fin à cet état de choses devenu de jour en jour plus intolérable et aussi nuisible pour l'ensemble du peuple belge que pour les individus, j'ai tout d'abord pris des arrêtés ayant pour but soit d'amender les ouvriers belges désœuvrés à se rendre volontairement en Allemagne, soit d'y faire transporter ceux qui d'instinct ont peur de travailler et qui refusent d'accomplir contre de bons salaires un travail adéquat à leurs capacités.

Telle est la thèse que le général-colonel Baron von Bissing, Gouverneur général en Belgique, a formulée lundi au cours d'un entretien d'une heure qu'il m'a accordé à son domicile à Berlin. Elle vaut qu'on s'y arrête. Son Excellence d'ailleurs a même été plus loin ; elle a fait ressortir qu'elle considérait l'évacuation des sans-travail de "profession" comme une mesure de défense contre le blocus de la Belgique et de l'Allemagne par l'Angleterre, la guerre économique mondiale

there was too much of Parisian sophistication in the Politische Abteilung to permit him to boast a patronizing intimacy with the

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ayant atteint maintenant une nouvelle phase qu'elle semble la faire s'approcher de son point culminant.

Voici comment s'est exprimé le Gouverneur général :

En retenant les matières premières, l'Angleterre essaye de mettre sous sa coupe l'industrie belge. Elle tend systématiquement à mettre la Belgique sous le joug au point de vue économique, en prévoyant la possibilité de se servir d'elle, au cours de la guerre économique qu'elle prépare contre l'Allemagne après la guerre militaire. Des hommes d'affaires belges m'ont dit que dans cette guerre économique, la Belgique n'aurait pas seulement à lutter contre la concurrence de l'Allemagne, mais encore contre celle de l'Angleterre et qu'ils estimaient indispensable, spécialement en vue de cette double occurrence, que l'industrie belge restât en activité. L'évacuation des ouvriers belges n'est un dur sacrifice ni pour le pays, ni pour la population. Nécessité provoquée par la guerre, elle est au fond un bienfait pour les ouvriers et un bien pour le pays.

Pour l'expliquer il me faut me reporter en arrière jusqu'au 1er décembre 1914, date de mon entrée en fonctions. Dès ce jour-là j'ai reconnu le danger que faisait courir à la Belgique la pénurie de travail et j'ai entrepris d'y parer.

L'implacable blocus économique de l'Allemagne par l'Angleterre a du même coup atteint la Belgique. Son économie politique qui dépend, comme vous le savez, de l'importation des matières premières et de l'exportation des produits fabriqués, a été frappée par ce blocus dans sa vitalité. Il en est résulté une forte augmentation du nombre des chômeurs et des secours qu'il s'imposait de leur assurer. La longue durée de la guerre a entraîné un emploi abusif de ces secours et provoqué une situation sociale intenable. C'est pourquoi j'ai invité les communes belges à donner de l'occupation au plus grand nombre possible de leurs chômeurs en décrétant l'exécution de travaux publics. Or, cette mesure a abouti avec le temps, à charger les communes de lourdes dettes, disproportionnées aux travaux entrepris par elles et momentanément improductifs. Il m'a fallu mettre un frein à ces dépenses et limiter les travaux pour sans-travail. J'ai fait alors de nouvelles tentatives en vue d'obtenir l'importation en Belgique de matières premières ; je m'y suis efforcé au point d'envoyer des personnes de confiance en Angleterre avec la mission de s'y informer sur le point de savoir si rien ne pouvait être fait pour sauver la Belgique industrielle de l'arrêt économique dont elle souffrait. J'étais disposé à prendre l'engagement de ne pas utiliser pour les besoins de l'Allemagne les produits fabriqués à l'aide de ces matières premières par le travail belge et d'en autoriser l'exportation à 75 p.c. de leur valeur : l'Angleterre inexorable, a fait la sourde oreille à toutes les représentations qui lui étaient faites de notre part en faveur de la Belgique.

Avant que l'obligation m'ait été imposée de prendre de nouvelles mesures, 30,000 ouvriers belges environ se sont rendus volontairement en Allemagne : ils y ont été traités sur le même pied que les ouvriers allemands et y ont gagné des salaires d'un taux inconnu en Belgique. Ils ont pu envoyer à leurs parents l'argent nécessaire à leur entretien, ont obtenu des congés qu'ils sollicitaient pour se rendre dans leur pays et ont été autorisés à faire venir leur famille en Allemagne. J'avais espéré que ce travail volontaire prendrait de plus en plus d'extension. Par malheur est survenu l'effet d'une active propagande que nos ennemis menaient à l'aide de tous les moyens imaginables, et en faisant surtout valoir comme argument que les Belges qui s'enrôlaient pour aller travailler en Allemagne n'étaient pas des patriotes. Cette propagande se fit auprès des familles des ouvriers qui avaient trouvé de l'occupation en Allemagne ou voulaient y aller en chercher, et fut poussée au point que l'on dressa des listes noires pour y inscrire ces ouvriers. Elle finit naturellement par endiguer le départ des volontaires.

Cependant, les plaintes qui dans l'entretemps m'étaient adressées au sujet

Almighty ; I do not know, indeed, that he was that way disposed ; at any rate Brussels was spared that. It was all that Brussels

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du manque de travail devenaient de plus en plus intolérables : ce sont elles qui m'ont engagé à publier mon décret du 15 mai de cette année. Ce décret ne prévoit l'obligation au travail que dans le cas où un chômeur refuse sans raisons valables d'accepter de faire, moyennant un salaire convenable un travail adéquat à sa capacité. Comme raison valable était admis expressément tout motif basé sur le droit des gens. Aucun ouvrier ne peut donc être contraint de prendre part à des entreprises travaillant pour la guerre ; toutes les affirmations suivant lesquelles des ouvriers belges auraient été astreints à des travaux pour la guerre sont contraires à la vérité.

À une question de son interlocuteur, M. le Gouverneur général a répondu qu'il avait envisagé la Prusse Rhénane et la Westphalie comme les régions particulièrement idoines à recevoir les évacués belges, dont l'évacuation est effectuée de la manière la plus humaine.

M. le Baron von Bissing continue :

Nous nous efforçons d'éviter toutes les injustices quelconques. J'ai donné des instructions sévères pour que le choix des hommes à expédier en Allemagne se fasse avec les plus grands ménagements, sur la base des listes des chômeurs ayant refusé le travail qui leur avait été offert. Chaque cas est l'objet d'une enquête spéciale faite en présence du bourgmestre compétent. Les familles qui restent en Belgique seront aidées par nous jusqu'à ce que ceux qui ont charge de les entretenir soient en mesure de leur envoyer une partie de leur salaire. Leur salaire en Allemagne est en moyenne de 8 mark par jour, alors que le salaire moyen en Belgique n'est que de 3½ à 4½ mark. L'alimentation, en outre, est meilleure pour eux en Allemagne. Les offres de travail en Allemagne sont portées à la connaissance des intéressés soit verbalement, soit par la voie de grandes affiches murales : la masse des ouvriers qui demandent du travail augmente de jour en jour.

Malgré cela, dans les parties de la Belgique qui dépendent de mon administration, c'est-à-dire les deux provinces des Flandres non comprises, il reste encore entre quatre et cinq cent mille sans travail, ce qui veut dire qu'y compris leurs familles, il y a sur les cinq millions et demi d'habitants dont se compose la population belge, plus d'un million de personnes qui dépendent de la bienfaisance publique.

En ce qui concerne les motifs pour lesquels les ouvriers sont envoyés en Allemagne au lieu qu'on les force à travailler en Belgique, M. le Gouverneur général dit :

Comme je vous l'ai dit tantôt, l'industrie belge dépend de manière absolue, en ce qui concerne les matières premières, des pays d'outre-mer. Le blocus anglais empêchant ces matières d'y arriver, l'Allemagne est le seul grand pays avec lequel la Belgique entretienne des rapports commerciaux. L'Allemagne n'a pas décrété contre la Belgique l'interdiction de paiement dont elle a fait une loi à l'égard des pays ennemis, et l'argent allemand y arrive de manière continue. Des centaines de milliers de personnes étant sans travail en Belgique et le travail abondant en Allemagne, l'occupation des chômeurs belges en Allemagne est donc devenue une nécessité économique et sociale.

On m'a objecté que l'envoi d'innombrables ouvriers belges en Allemagne détruirait la vie de famille de ces ouvriers. Je me bornerai à répondre à cette observation que c'est précisément la situation belge actuelle qui y crée les plus graves dangers pour la vie de famille. D'ailleurs les ouvriers qui s'engagent volontairement en Allemagne peuvent rester en communication avec leur famille et ils obtiendront à des intervalles réguliers, s'ils le désirent des congés pour revenir dans leur pays. Il leur est même permis d'emmener leur famille. Plusieurs dizaines de milliers d'ouvriers belges sont déjà partis volontairement pour l'Allemagne : ils y sont mis, je le répète, sur le même pied que les ouvriers allemands et y touchent des salaires d'un niveau inconnu en Belgique, de telle sorte

was spared; the interview added irony to insult and injury by the pretence that the deportations were in the Belgian interest.

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qu'au lieu de vivre de la charité publique et de devenir des misérieux, il leur est possible de reconquérir l'aisance.

Les salaires qu'ils touchent ne profitent pas seulement aux ouvriers isolés et à leur famille, mais aussi à l'économie politique belge par le fait qu'ils augmentent le montant de l'argent expédié sur une grande échelle d'Allemagne en Belgique. Le nombre des ouvriers volontaires serait beaucoup plus grand, si l'on ne mettait en œuvre toutes sortes d'influences pour déconseiller aux ouvriers d'accepter du travail en Allemagne. Nous devons faire malgré eux le bonheur de ceux qui hésitent et qui tergiversent. Si nous exerçons vis-à-vis d'eux une contrainte, nous l'exerçons de la manière la plus humaine possible. Si dans certains cas isolés, il n'est pas possible d'éviter d'user de rigueur, ceux qui en sont victimes ne doivent s'en prendre qu'à ceux qui les ont empêchés de travailler de bon gré.

Translation

THE QUESTION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

The Berlin correspondent of the *New York Times* has interviewed His Excellency Baron von Bissing, Governor-General in Belgium. Commenting on this interview, the *North German Gazette* publishes a long article. Every one knows the eagerness with which we place under the eyes of our readers, to whom above all information is necessary at this time in order that they may reasonably understand events, official and semi-official writings from which one may obtain a sane appreciation of facts. It is in that spirit we reproduce below the article of the *North German Gazette*. It treats a question which concerns every Belgian in the highest degree at this moment, and for this reason will be read by every one with interest.

As a result of the economic strangulation of Belgium, which England undertakes without any regard for the latter, more than a million of impoverished Belgian men, women, and children find themselves to-day depending on public charity. By suppressing the importation of raw materials and by forbidding the exportation of finished products England has condemned more than half a million Belgian working men to a chronic state of inactivity which demoralizes them. They and their families are to-day a charge on the communes. In order to put an end to this state of things, which becomes every day more intolerable and as injurious for the whole of the Belgian people as for individuals, I first issued decrees in order either to induce unemployed Belgian working men to go voluntarily into Germany, or to cause to be transported there those who by instinct are afraid of labour and who refuse to accomplish for good wages a work adequate to their capacities.

Such was the thesis that Colonel-General Baron von Bissing, Governor-General in Belgium, formulated on Monday in the course of an interview that he accorded me in his home at Berlin. It is worth while to consider it. His Excellency, moreover, went further; he pointed out that he considered the evacuation of the "professional" unemployed as a measure of defence against the blockade of Belgium and Germany by England, the world-wide economic war having attained now a new phase which seems to approach its culminating-point.

The Governor-General expressed himself as follows:

In withholding raw materials England tries to bring Belgian industry under her control. She tries systematically to put Belgium under the economic yoke with a view of using her later in the course of the economic war that she is preparing against Germany after the military war. Belgian men of affairs have told me that in this economic war Belgium will have to struggle not only against the competition of Germany but also against that of England, and that they considered it indispensable, especially in view of this double competition, that Belgian industry remain in activity. The evacuation of Belgian working men

Whatever reluctance he may have had in adopting the policy, he now warmly justified its execution; as one might have antici-

is not a heavy sacrifice either for the country or for the population. It is a necessity of the war, and at bottom a benefit for the working men and a good thing for the country.

In order to explain it, I must go back as far as December 1, 1914, the date when I entered upon the discharge of my functions. Ever since that day I have recognized the danger that Belgium was running by the lack of labour, and I have tried to remedy it.

The implacable economic blockade of Germany by England at the same time affected Belgium. Its economic policy, which depends, as you know, on the importation of raw materials and the exportation of finished products, was struck a mortal blow by it. The result is a great increase in the number of unemployed and of the help which it is necessary to give them. The long duration of the war has brought about many abuses in these charities and provoked an impossible social situation. This was why I asked the Belgian communes to give employment to the greatest possible number of their unemployed by undertaking public works. Now this measure finally resulted in time in loading the communes with heavy debts disproportionate to the work undertaken by them, and momentarily unproductive. It was necessary, then, to put a check on this expenditure and to limit the works for the unemployed. I then made new efforts in order to obtain the importation into Belgium of raw materials. I went so far as to send those in whom I have confidence to England with the mission of informing themselves whether or not something could be done to save industrial Belgium from the economic standstill from which she suffered. I was disposed to agree not to use for the needs of Germany the products manufactured by Belgian labour out of these raw materials, and to authorize the exportation of 75 per cent. of them. But inexorable England turned a deaf ear to all representations that were made to her in favour of Belgium.

Before I was obliged to take new measures, about thirty thousand Belgian working men had gone voluntarily to Germany. There they were placed on the same footing as German working men, and they gain wages at a rate unknown in Belgium. They were able to send to their relatives the money necessary to support them. They were given the leave of absence which they asked to return to their country, and were authorized to take their families to Germany. I had hoped that thus voluntary labour would more and more increase. Then, unfortunately, there was felt the effect of an active propaganda which our enemies carried on by the aid of all imaginable means, and by which they put forward the argument that the Belgians who enrolled themselves to go and work in Germany were not patriotic. This propaganda was made in families of working men who had found work in Germany or wished to go there to seek it, and was pushed to the point of drawing up a black list with the names of these working men. It finished, naturally, by stopping the departure of these volunteers.

However, the complaints which in the meantime were addressed to me because of the lack of labour were becoming more and more intolerable, and they caused me to publish my decree of May 25 of this year. This decree did not provide any obligation to work, except in the case of non-employed persons who refused without good reason to accept for an adequate salary labour equal to their capacities. Every motive based on international law was expressly admitted as a valid reason. No working man could be compelled to take part in war work, and every information according to which Belgian working men have been compelled to do such labour is contrary to the truth.

In response to a question of his interlocutor, the Governor-General replied that he had contemplated Rhenish Prussia and Westphalia as the regions particularly proper to receive the evacuated Belgians, and that this evacuation was effected in the most humane manner.

Baron von Bissing continues:

We tried to avoid every kind of injustice. I gave severe instructions that

pated, it was based on the customary premise that it was really England who was to blame, in that by her blockade she had

the choice of men to be sent to Germany should be made with the greatest care, on the basis of the lists of unemployed who had refused work offered to them. Each case was the object of a special inquiry made in the presence of the competent Burgomaster. The families who remain in Belgium will be attended to by us until those who are charged with their support are able to send them a part of their wages. The wages in Germany are fixed at a minimum of 8 marks a day, while the average wage in Belgium is not more than 3½ to 4½ marks. Besides, the food in Germany is better for them. The offers of work in Germany are brought to the attention of the interested persons either verbally or by means of great posters on the walls, and the number of labourers who ask work is increasing every day.

Despite this, in those parts of Belgium which are included in my administration —that is to say, outside of the two Flanders—there still remain between four and five hundred thousands of unemployed; that is to say that, including their families, out of five and a half millions of inhabitants of which the Belgian population is composed, more than a million persons are dependent on public charities.

As concerns the motives for which the working men are sent to Germany rather than forced to work in Belgium, the Governor-General says:

As I said to you a while ago, Belgian industry depends absolutely, so far as raw materials are concerned, on overseas countries. As the English blockade prevents these materials from arriving here, Germany is the only great country with which Belgium has commercial relations. Germany did not apply to Belgium, as she did to enemy countries, the law which prohibited payment, and German money goes into Belgium continuously. Hundreds of thousands of persons are without work in Belgium, and as there is plenty of work to be found in Germany, the use of the Belgian working men in Germany has become an economic and social necessity.

I have heard it objected that the sending of innumerable Belgian working men to Germany destroys the family life of these working men. I shall only say that it is precisely the present situation in Belgium which creates the gravest dangers for family life. Besides, those working men who voluntarily engage to work in Germany can remain in communication with their families, and will obtain from time to time permission to return to their country. They will even be permitted to take their families with them. Several thousands of Belgian working men have already gone voluntarily to Germany; they are placed there, I repeat, on the same footing as German working men and receive wages at a rate unknown in Belgium, so that instead of living on public charity and becoming paupers, it is possible for them to gain an easy situation in life.

The wages they receive are a benefit not only to isolated working men and to their families, but also to the Belgian economic policy, because they increase the amount of money sent on a great scale from Germany into Belgium. The number of Belgian voluntary working men would be much greater if they were not subjected to all sorts of influences to induce them not to accept work in Germany. But in spite of themselves, we must make happy those who hesitate and who tergiversate. If we exercise any constraint on them, we exercise it in the most humane manner possible. If in certain cases it has not been possible to avoid using rigorous treatment, those who are the victims of it must blame only those who have prevented them from working of their own accord.

Bissing frequently gave out interviews, all of them "carefully prepared." About this time the following appeared in *La Belgique*:

L'ADMINISTRATION DE LA BELGIQUE OCCUPÉE

Le *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* reproduit un entretien accordé le 17 novembre à son directeur, M. H. Brauweiler, par M. le général-colonel Baron von Bissing, Gouverneur général en Belgique, au château de Trois-Fontaines.

L'entretien a roulé sur les plaintes formulées en ces derniers temps par divers

doomed the Belgian population to a demoralizing idleness and prevented the success of his efforts for *la reprise du travail*; and this seemed to Von Bissing to be sufficient reason for "evacuating" the working men, who were "living on public charity." It was neither a "cruel sacrifice for the nation nor for the population,"

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journaux catholiques contre l'administration allemande en Belgique dans la question de l'égalité de traitement réclamée pour la religion catholique et la religion protestante. Le Baron von Bissing a expressément protesté contre le reproche qu'on lui adresse de vouloir "protestantiser" la Belgique. Il estime avoir prouvé manifestement à différentes reprises qu'il est éloigné de semblable intention. Il suffit à ses accusateurs, pour reconnaître l'injustice de leur reproche, de constater que du côté opposé on lui a fait le reproche exactement contraire. Il se tient par conséquent dans le juste milieu.

En ce qui concerne l'occupation des postes de fonctionnaires en Belgique, M. le Baron von Bissing dit qu'il regrette qu'au début ne lui aient été adressées que de très rares demandes émanant de catholiques, mais qu'en ce moment il est satisfait de pouvoir conserver ceux qu'il a. Il ne croit pas d'ailleurs qu'une augmentation du nombre des fonctionnaires catholiques serait d'une utilité essentielle pour l'administration.

Au sujet de l'Université de Gand, M. le Gouverneur général a déclaré que le petit nombre de professeurs catholiques trouve son explication dans le fait que les efforts tentés en vue d'engager des professeurs catholiques n'ont pas eu, à son regret, autant de succès qu'il l'avait espéré, ses efforts se sont heurtés à une résistance très nette.

Enfin, M. le Baron von Bissing s'est exprimé comme suit concernant les intentions de son administration en général et les buts auxquels elle tend, en présence des réserves énoncées dans certains milieux de l'Allemagne qui lui reprochent une mansuétude excessive:

"Mon programme est simple. Je ne suis pas ici pour molester le pays ou y user de représailles, mais pour le gouverner dans l'intérêt allemand.

"Quiconque se rend compte de la mission vraiment difficile qui consiste à porter la responsabilité de l'administration d'un pays occupé et d'y collaborer, sait que cette tâche ne peut être autrement assumée qu'elle ne l'est par moi. Il me faut tenir compte du particularisme du pays et du caractère de sa population dans la mesure du possible. Si j'agissais autrement, je rendrais non seulement mon travail plus difficile, ce qui d'ailleurs n'aurait pas d'importance, mais j'entraverais le succès de l'activité allemande. Je suis guidé par le droit et par la justice et j'ai le devoir de respecter les stipulations du Droit des gens. Quand je suis obligé de punir, je le fais—cela aussi est un devoir que me commande ma responsabilité—mais je ne punis qu'après avoir consulté mon devoir et selon ma conscience. Et n'est-ce pas un mérite que doivent me reconnaître même ceux qui me reprochent une excessive mansuétude, le fait que les principes de mon administration ont empêché des troubles de surgir dans un pays situé si près de l'arrière du front à l'Ouest.

"Je suis un vieux soldat et je ne me verrais pas de gaîté de cœur acculé à la nécessité d'agir par les armes contre une population sans défense. Le meilleur service que je puisse rendre à l'Empereur et à la patrie, c'est de gouverner ici de telle sorte que de sanglants sacrifices puissent être épargnés à nos troupes et qu'il ne faille soustraire au front de bataille que des forces aussi minimes que possible. Si c'est de gouverner ainsi qu'on me fait le reproche, je consens volontiers à en prendre la responsabilité."

Translation

THE ADMINISTRATION OF OCCUPIED BELGIUM

The *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* reproduces an interview granted on November 17

but a "necessity provoked by the war," and "a godsend for the labourers and the country." He endeavoured to avoid "every possible injustice," and had given "strict orders that the selection of men to be sent to Germany should be performed with the greatest fairness, on the basis of the lists of the unemployed who had refused the work offered them." In short, said the Governor-

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to its Director, M. H. Brauweiler, by Colonel-General Baron von Bissing, Governor-General in Belgium, at the château of Trois-Fontaines.

The interview turned on the subject of the complaints voiced recently by several Catholic newspapers against the German administration in Belgium concerning the equality of treatment demanded for the Catholic and the Protestant religions. Baron von Bissing protested particularly against the reproach made that he wishes to "protestantize" Belgium. He feels that he has shown conclusively on different occasions that he is far from having such an intention. In order that his accusers may recognize the injustice of their reproach it is sufficient to state that the opposite party has made exactly the opposite complaint. He follows therefore a middle course.

Concerning the appointment of functionaries in Belgium Baron von Bissing says that he regrets that at the beginning only a very few applications were addressed to him by Catholics, but at this time he is satisfied to be able to retain the ones he has. He does not believe, moreover, that an increase in the number of Catholic functionaries would be of essential benefit to the administration.

Concerning the University of Ghent the Governor-General said that the small number of Catholic professors is explained by the fact that his efforts looking toward the retention of Catholic professors have not had, to his regret, the success for which he had hoped; his efforts have met with a very strong resistance.

Finally Baron von Bissing expressed himself as follows concerning the general intentions of his administration and the ends toward which it is aiming, in view of the criticisms uttered in certain circles in Germany which reproach him with an excessive mildness:

"My programme is simple. I am not here to molest the country or to make reprisals, but to govern it in the interest of Germany.

"Whoever considers the truly difficult nature of the task of assuming the responsibility of the administration of an occupied country, and of collaborating therein, knows that it cannot be assumed otherwise than as I have done it. I must bear in mind as much as possible the particularism of the country and the character of its population. If I acted otherwise I should not only make my work more difficult, which after all would be of no importance, but I should impede the progress of German activity. I am guided by law and by justice, and it is my duty to respect the provisions of international law. When I am obliged to punish I do so—that also is a duty which my responsibility requires of me—but I punish only after having considered my duty, and in accordance with my conscience. And is the fact not a merit, which even those who reproach me with having been too mild must recognize in me, that the principles of my administration have prevented disturbances in a country situated so near the rear of the Western Front?

"I am an old soldier and I should not be pleased to find myself forced by necessity to proceed by force of arms against a defenceless population. The best service that I can render to the Emperor and to the country is to govern here in such a manner that bloody sacrifices may be spared our troops, and that it may be necessary to withdraw from the battle-front only the smallest possible number of soldiers. If it is for governing in this way that I am reproached I consent willingly to assume the responsibility for it."

General, "We must bring happiness to those who in spite of themselves hesitate and are evasive. If we adopt compulsion toward them, it is done in the most humane manner possible. If, in certain isolated cases, it is not possible to avoid rigorous treatment, the victims have only to blame those who prevented them from enlisting voluntarily."

The very same day there were *affiches* ordering the restoration of the ruined towns of Belgium,* and the injustice of such

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* AVIS

L'administration communale a reçu de Son Excellence le Gouverneur général l'ordre de commencer, à partir du 1er janvier 1917, à démolir les bâtiments qui, par suite d'événements de guerre, ont été endommagés ou détruits au point de ne plus répondre au but auquel ils étaient destinés autrefois.

Pour certaines ruines situées le long de la voie ferrée, la date fixée pour le commencement des travaux de démolition pourra être avancée.

Les propriétaires de semblables constructions seront exemptés, sur demande, de l'obligation de les démolir, s'ils établissent qu'ils l'occupent sérieusement et sont à même de les reconstruire sans retard. Les demandes doivent être adressées à M. le Commissaire civil (Zivilkommissar) avant de 1er janvier 1917. Les auteurs des demandes sont tenus de déclarer en même temps par écrit à l'administration communale qu'ils ont remis une demande d'exemption.

La déclaration faite à l'administration communale pour lui annoncer qu'une demande d'exemption a été introduite, entraîne la suspension des travaux de démolition jusqu'à ce qu'une décision soit intervenue et notifiée à l'administration communale.

L'administration communale est tenue de prévenir les propriétaires de tous les bâtiments en ruines (même les propriétaires qui sont absents mais peuvent être avertis par la voie postale) qu'elle est obligée d'en commencer la démolition s'ils ne demandent et n'obtiennent pas une exemption.

Des demandes de subsides pour la reconstruction des bâtiments endommagés par suite d'événements de guerre peuvent être adressées à M. le Commissaire civil.

LOUVAIN, *le* 13 *décembre* 1916. LUBBERT, *Oberst und Kreischef.*

Translation

NOTICE

The communal administration has received from His Excellency the Governor-General the order to begin, on January 1, 1917, to demolish the buildings which, as a result of operations of war, have been damaged or destroyed to an extent which renders it impossible to use them for their former purpose.

For certain ruins situated along the railroad the date fixed for the beginning of the work of demolition may be advanced.

The proprietors of such buildings, on demand, will be exempted from the obligation to tear them down if they can prove that they really occupy them and are able to reconstruct them without delay. Such requests must be addressed to the Civil Commissioner before January 1, 1917. Those who make such requests will have to declare at the same time in writing, at the communal administration, that they have made a demand for exemption.

The declaration of such a demand of exemption, when made to the communal administration, will operate as a suspension of the work of demolition until a decision can be reached and the communal administration be notified.

The communal administration must notify the proprietors of all buildings in ruins, even those proprietors who are absent but who can be notified by the

a demand deepened the indignation of the people. Indeed the *affiches* at that time seemed to rain down grief and calamity on

post, that the commune is obliged to begin to demolish them if they do not demand and obtain an exemption.

Demands for subsidies for reconstructing buildings that have been damaged by acts of war may be addressed to the Civil Commissioner.

LOUVAIN, *December* 13, 1916. LUBBERT, *Oberst und Kreischef.*

AVIS CONCERNANT LA RECONSTRUCTION DES BÂTIMENTS DÉTRUITS

Me référant à ma circulaire relative à la démolition et à la reconstruction de bâtiments détruits par suite d'événements de guerre, j'engage les administrations communales à commencer intensivement les travaux de démolition visés par cette circulaire. Il y a lieu de faire observer qu'il s'offre ainsi une excellente occasion d'assurer une occupation stable aux sans-travail et que précisément la saison actuelle, où l'agriculture réclame moins de bras qu'en tout autre moment de l'année, se prête particulièrement à ces travaux.

Le prétexte souvent invoqué que la loi belge défend aux administrations communales de disposer de la propriété des habitants absents ou ne consentant pas à reconstruire, et qu'elles ne sont conséquemment pas autorisées à démolir les bâtiments visés, est réduit à neant par l'arrêté pris par S.E. le Gouverneur général en date du 12 septembre 1916.

En outre, l'attention est attirée tout spécialement sur le grand avantage résultant du fait que d'importants subsides sont assurés pour la démolition et la reconstruction des bâtiments détruits. Ces subsides sont accordés sans aucune obligation de restitution ou de payement d'intérêts. Il convient d'introduire le plus tôt possible les demandes tendantes à l'obtention de ces subsides, afin que le payement puisse s'en faire dans le plus bref délai.

L'autorité allemande attend des administrations communales qu'elles activent énergiquement ces travaux.

Der Zivilkommissar beim Kaiserl. Kreischef Brüssel, v. WEDDERKOP.

Translation

NOTICE CONCERNING THE RECONSTRUCTION OF DESTROYED BUILDINGS

Referring to my circular relative to the demolition and to the reconstruction of buildings destroyed by acts of war, I charge the communal administrations to begin vigorously the work of demolition envisaged by this circular. It should be remarked that thus is offered an excellent occasion to give continuous work to the unemployed, and that the present season, when agriculture requires fewer arms than at any other time of the year, is admirably adapted to this labour.

The pretext so often invoked that the Belgian law prohibits communal administrations from disposing of the property of those inhabitants who are absent or who do not consent to reconstruct their buildings, and that consequently they are not authorized to demolish the buildings in question, is reduced to nothing by the decree issued by His Excellency the Governor-General and bearing date September 12, 1916.

Besides, attention is specially drawn to the great advantage that will result from the fact that important subsidies are provided for the demolition and reconstruction of damaged buildings. These subsidies are accorded without any obligation of restitution or of payment of interest. It will be well to introduce as soon as possible the demands for these subsidies in order that the payment may be made in as little delay as possible.

The German authority expects that the communal administrations will energetically push forward this work.

The Civil Commissioner with the Imperial Kreischef of Brussels, V. WEDDERKOP.

the land. One of them a few days later announced that the contribution to be paid by Belgium for the year 1917 would be fifty million francs a month, an increase of ten million francs a month over the former contribution, and Von Bissing had signed the decrees the same day on which he gave out his interview stating that the Belgians had been seized and borne off to German mines and quarries solely in the interest of Belgium, which was too poor to support idlers. Another decree of that same day announced that Brussels, Schaerbeek, and several other communes would thereafter be *communes flamandes*, which meant that only the Flemish language would be used in the criminal courts—a part of the plan for the division of the country, and the precursor, many felt, of a decree ordaining Flemish as the sole language in use in the schools. And as though the *mitrailleuses* and all this were not enough, a Zeppelin, with horrid whir of motor, circled low and menacing over the city.

Then on November 20 there was a great red *affiche* on the walls, and a red *affiche* was usually either the signal or the seal of tragedy. This *affiche* ordered that after November 21 all public establishments, hotels, shops, restaurants, theatres, cinemas in all Brussels were to close at eight o'clock in the evening. No one, unless he were a German or a citizen of a neutral country or of a country allied in war with Germany, could be abroad in the streets without a written permission from the Kommandantur. The reason given for this measure was that there had been " demonstrations " at Ste.-Gudule and at St.-Jacques-sur-Caudenberg on the King's fête, those pathetic demonstrations of sorrow, and of the hope that was trying so hard to keep itself alive. But Brussels thought it was a precautionary measure for the night when the slavers should come to Brussels.*

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* AVIS

Le 15 novembre, des démonstrations politiques considérables se sont produites dans les églises de Ste.-Gudule et de St.-Jacques-sur-Caudenberg et continuées sur le parvis des deux églises.

À cette occasion, des Allemands ont été insultés par la foule.

Pour cette raison, j'ordonne ce qui suit :

À partir du 21 novembre, et jusqu'à nouvel ordre, tous les établissements publics servant aux divertissements, les hôtels, restaurants, cafés et magasins, devront être fermés à 8 heures du soir.

Le présent arrêté est applicable à tout le territoire de l'agglomération bruxelloise.

Il ne sera fait exception que pour les restaurants, etc., qui auront obtenu de la " Kommandantur " la permission de rester ouverts plus longtemps.

De 8 h. 30 du soir à 4 heures du matin, seules pourront circuler dans les

Indeed, turn where one would in Brussels or in Belgium those days one saw the evidence of some new injustice. Whenever I

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rues les personnes qui en auront obtenu la permission écrite d'une autorité allemande.

La dite interdiction n'est pas applicable aux personnes de nationalité allemande et aux ressortissants de pays alliés ou neutres. Ces personnes devront prouver leur nationalité en montrant leur certificat d'identité.

La dite interdiction n'est pas applicable non plus aux fonctionnaires de la police communale portant leur uniforme, aux employés des compagnies de tramways et des sociétés des veilleurs de nuit et autres entreprises analogues, à la condition qu'ils portent l'uniforme de leurs sociétés et prouvent leur qualité d'employés.

Les infractions aux présentes dispositions seront punies soit d'une amende pouvant atteindre 10,000 mark et d'une peine d'emprisonnement de 3 mois au plus, soit d'une de ces deux peines à l'exclusion de l'autre. En outre, on pourra prononcer la fermeture, pour une période de temps plus ou moins longue, des établissements publics servant aux divertissements, des restaurants, cafés, magasins, etc.

Les tribunaux et commandants militaires sont compétents pour juger les dites infractions.

Der Gouverneur von Brüssel und Brabant,

BRUXELLES, *le* 18 *novembre* 1916. HURT, *Generalleutnant.*

Translation

NOTICE

On November 15 large political demonstrations were held in the churches of Ste.-Gudule and St.-Jacques-sur-Caudenberg, and continued on the spaces before the two churches.

On this occasion the Germans were insulted by the crowd.

For this reason I order as follows:

On and after November 21 and until further orders, all public establishments serving for amusement, hotels, restaurants, cafés, and shops must be closed at 8 o'clock in the evening.

The present decree is applicable to the whole agglomeration of Brussels. The only exception made will be for restaurants, etc., that have obtained from the Kommandantur permission to remain open for a longer time.

From 8.30 in the evening till 4 o'clock in the morning no one can circulate in the streets except those who will have obtained a written permission from a German authority.

The said interdiction does not apply to persons of German nationality, or persons of Allied or neutral countries. These persons must prove their nationality by showing their certificate of identity.

The said interdiction is not applicable either to functionaries of the communal police in uniform, or to employés of the tramway companies and the societies of night watchmen and other similar enterprises, on condition that they wear the uniform of their society and prove their quality of employés.

Infractions of the present regulations will be punished either by a fine which may go as high as 10,000 marks and by imprisonment for not more than three weeks, or by one of these punishments to the exclusion of the other. Besides, the public establishments serving for amusement, restaurants, cafés, shops, etc., may be closed for a period of time more or less long.

The tribunals and military commandants are competent to try the said infractions.

The Governor of Brussels and Brabant,
HURT, *Lieutenant-General.*

BRUSSELS, *November* 18, 1916.

drove past Quatre-Bras I would see the sentinels arresting the women with the potatoes which they had thought to take to their hungry children at home. I cannot forget that picture—the women, their meek heads bowed under their thin black shawls, and bent in the pathetic resignation of the patient poor, being led away to prison. *L'emballage*, the peasants called it, and to accomplish it there were new and zealous sentinels detailed at that spot which I had seen change in three years from a gay and lively cross-roads, with a popular inn where cyclists and automobilists stopped for luncheon or tea, to a grim sentinel-post where every passer-by was halted, and many searched and often dragged off to prison.

Those who had so confidently hoped that the war would not endure another winter were giving up that hope; the offensive of the Allies, of which Brussels was just then incapable of appreciating the military results, had been to waiting Belgium but one more failure, and from Rumania there was the news of the German victory that seemed so inevitably to arrive with every autumn. And winter was already there—a winter whose snows, some said, would be the shroud of Belgium.

Thus, even when friends gathered together, this sorrow, this pervading sense of tragedy, was never absent. I had gone one afternoon to Van Holder's studio for the unveiling and presentation of a portrait that had been painted in those summer days when Van Holder's garden was all abloom with flowers and sweet with their perfume. The steadily falling rain, the garden all sodden and dead, the line of men and women under dripping umbrellas, the gathering in the studio, every one depressed by the war and by personal bereavement, the touching little speeches —and Van Holder just informed by his physician that he must go to Switzerland—all this made the moment one the impression of which endures. . . .

I got into my motor to go to the Orangerie; it was twilight, vague figures were scurrying through those sad, deserted streets, hurrying homeward before the hour of the German curfew. And this was Brussels, once so beautiful and gay and light-hearted in its careless liberty.

Would the long nightmare ever end? Would the land that reeked of German injustice, and bled from German brutality, ever be delivered? Must the little nation, the brave little people

that had preferred honour above all, and so instantly flung itself before the German legions at Liége and Namur, and saved Paris, and standing again along the Yser, saved Britain and America and all that their civilizations had wrought—must it drain the cup of sacrifice to the dregs? . . .

It is not a pleasant incident to record in connexion with an old man's death, a man whose long life devoted to the pursuit of the vain pomp and glory of this world had been prolonged through so many dark and tragic years, but there was no sorrow in Brussels when the death was announced of the Emperor Franz-Josef. A diplomat told me that in the presence of the hideous deeds in which the last of the many wars the Emperor had known was so prolific, the aged Hapsburg had one day sorrowfully exclaimed:

"*Der Krieg hat gar nichts elegantes mehr.*"

And perhaps that is why, when their old Imperial enemy died in the midst of a war in which not one of the tenets of chivalry had been left unbroken in its relation to them, the Brussels people lifted their eyes indifferently to the staff of the Legation in the Rue Montoyer, where the flag of the Dual Monarchy hung *en berne.*

L'increvable, they called him, in their incorrigible Brussels mockery.

Villalobar and I went to offer our condolences to the Baron von und zu Franckenstein, the Austrian Commissioner who occupied the Legation where we used to go to see the Clarys in the old days, and a few days later we all went to the solemn requiem High Mass in Ste.-Gudule for the repose of the soul of his late Sovereign.

Ruddock and I drove to the old pile in the cold and clammy atmosphere of the fog that rolled its grey billows through the city. There on the *parvis* was a group of German staff officers, tall, massive men, gigantic in the dim refracting light of the fog. Standing there in their long, grey greatcoats, the grey covers on their helmets, strange, weird, terrible silhouettes against the grey fog-bank, waiting for the Governor-General to arrive, they looked like monstrous grey ghosts of anthropoids. Villalobar was in one of the handsomest of his many uniforms, a great black cloak with an enormous silver cross on it, and a *chapeau de bras,* with plumes. I in my pelisse, glad for once that American

diplomats have no uniform in which to hide themselves, since Marcy decreed that they should be democratic and conspicuous, took my place beside him in the choir—we were almost on the horns of the altar. Lancken was there, holding the great silver helmet that made him Lohengrin when he wore it. The chancel, hung in black velvet with silver ornamentation, was transformed into a *chapelle ardente*, the arms of the Hapsburgs high over the altar, and drawn up on either side were platoons of the Imperial Guards in their *opéra-bouffe* uniforms of white with red piping, and with drawn swords. Then the high catafalque under its velvet pall, with a mass of gorgeous chrysanthemums. The choir was filled with German officers of high rank, and the nave and transept were thronged with officers of lower rank and with soldiers, and the diplomats were there, Mahmoud Khan and Blancas and Poussette in black, and Cavalcanti in uniform, and the Nuncio, shown to the episcopal chair, making the sign of the cross and folding his hands in their violet gloves.

The Governor-General, with all his decorations, the broad orange ribbon of the Black Eagle *en sautoir*, entered, accompanied by Franckenstein and two of the Guards in the comic uniforms. He walked with those stiff, almost automatic, movements, a figure to remark, with his leather skin, his shining pomaded hair, his brilliant sick eyes. But he entered with sovereign airs, to the ruffle of drums, strode to the prominent place reserved for him, before the altar, bowed to left and right—and the Mass straightway began.

The celebrant was a chaplain of the German army, or perhaps it was the Austrian army, and he had another chaplain to serve him, their grey trousers and tan boots conspicuous below their priestly vestments. There were two other priests, but no altar-boys—there were none to be had, I dare say—but instead there were common soldiers, grey-haired, in soiled, ill-fitting uniforms of grey, but solicitous, painfully anxious to please, and besides a big boy scout with an adolescent moustache and two tonsured monks, one of whom stood with piously folded hands wearing a vacant smile and an expression of silly, almost degenerate meekness.

After the Mass, one of the army chaplains preached vehemently, growing very red, pouring forth his harsh gutturals from a thick throat; he extolled the late Emperor, to whom he referred

as a Prince of Peace, and, with some inaccuracy in his historical knowledge, said that he had never drawn the sword in war until his eighty-fourth year, when he was stabbed foully in the back.

I stood there in that cold church—one could see one's breath—with the reflections that always crowded on me in that place, whose scenes, were they reproduced, would form a pageant of the history of the world since the time Godefroy de Bouillon went forth to the Crusades. Now it was filled with the grey hordes that had poured down out of northern fogs to overrun the world, led by those men standing there, stalwart, strong, with brutal, rapacious faces, yet gloomy, too, in sodden melancholy, but with no thought of receding—that grey deluge! Villalobar was at my right, whispering his interesting gossip, his amusing observations on everybody; Harrach was on my other side, pointing out now and then some notable, identifying some order on the grey breasts, assiduously assigning every one his rank. . . . There was an enormous man in uniform towering a head above the others, blond, with a heavy, preoccupied expression, enormous yellow moustache, purblindly peering through glasses. "*Un professeur d'histoire; très fameux,*" whispered Harrach. . . . You will have to peer deeply into our epoch, O famous historian, and with clearer vision than any German yet has shown, to perceive the truth in this complicated mass of human deviltry! . . . Far across the chancel there was a Chinese face, grinning humorously, one of the military attachés down at the Grand Quartier Général, come up with other attachés to see the show. . . .

The priests were walking slowly about the catafalque with candles and censer and aspersorium—*requiescat in pace.* Were the pale immaculate ghosts of Italian patriots who died in foul dungeons under Austrian misrule half a century before pressing forward in hosts to behold the young monarch who had wronged them so, old now, his long reign ended at last? . . .

That afternoon Mr. Gregory came to the Legation to report that the slave-gangs were seizing, more and more, the men of the C.N. and of the C.R.B., and I had a telegram from London to the effect that the British Government would stop the *ravitaillement* if the press continued.

The next morning Villalobar and I went over to the Politische Abteilung; Baron von der Lancken had gone to Berlin; we saw

Count Harrach instead. We were as near to despair as we had ever been; we had tried every resource of diplomacy, of tact, of politeness; many and many a time I had put some particularly hard communication into French in order to soften its sometimes too peremptory tone, but now the time for all this was gone. There was a species of relief in the fact, the relief that comes now and then with desperation, those moments when fate may at last be defied to do its worst. I did not translate the latest British Note into diplomatic French; I flung it on to the table, and said to the Count:

"*Lisez-la.*"

He read it, and before he could comment I said:

"*Et vos hommes saisissent les employés du Comité National et de la C.R.B. tous les jours; et ces Juifs enlèvent les bestiaux de nouveau, ils passent la frontière tous les soirs.*"

The Count looked up at us.

"*Si vous voulez que le ravitaillement craque—qu'il craque,*" I said.

And the Marquis nodded grave acquiescence. The Count's face was serious and concerned.

"*J'écrirai à Berlin,*" he said.

"*Non, télégraphiez,*" said the Marquis.

"*Non,*" I added, "*téléphonez.*"

The Count left the room in a hurry. An instant later he was at the telephone, calling up Berlin.

XXXII. FEAR

And now there was a new phenomenon in Brussels, theretofore unknown, one of those amorphous expressions of the psychology of the crowd, a thing indefinable, instinctive, atavistic, evoked out of the mysterious and unfathomable depths of human consciousness. No one identified it, it went unnamed, unrecognized; men entered into a tacit and spontaneous conspiracy not to mention it, yet each felt it and was himself its helpless victim. That vague, unnamed thing was fear, a monstrous, cruel, odious fear under the dominion of which men felt all the sensations that are ascribed to those who have seen ghosts or hideous apparitions, vague, spectral emergences beyond the common experience of

man. It was not that natural and human shrinking from danger which courage overcomes, it was not mere cowardice, it was deeper, more subtle and terrible, the instinctive dread that animals and savages know, a thing of human instinct that lay beyond the jurisdiction of the reason, from which there was no escape; it was not to be conjured or dismissed. The invasion of the German hordes, the long reign of terror, the persecutions and plottings, the spies and secret agents, the summary trials, the drumhead courts martial, the firing-squads, all the enginery of a soulless military despotism, scorning all the restraints that men of honour have devised, had never been able to produce that sensation, but now the gangs of slavers stealing through the land, appearing suddenly at night, tearing men from their beds, from their wives and children, to send them off into that shameful bondage, benumbed the very currents of the soul, destroyed the few of life's satisfactions that were left; men dreaded the coming of the night, and the dawn brought them no surcease or hope.

Brussels had not as yet witnessed any of the shameful scenes, but the great round-up, the man-hunt, was closing in. One day it was announced that the *chômeurs* of Tervueren had been summoned, three hundred and seventy of them; they were to report on a certain day at a given hour. The day came, but not one reported. And nothing happened. Had the Germans abandoned their intention, recoiled before the flood of a moral indignation so overwhelming that it could daunt and change the purpose even of German militarism?

But no; they were insensible to moral influence—and the Burgomaster had been summoned to give up the lists of *chômeurs*. The stout Lemonnier had refused, point-blank—let the consequences be what they might. And a little handbill was circulating through the city:

WE WILL NOT GO!*

The order for the men of Antwerp to report had been posted early in November; a similar order was expected to appear on

* The handbill was as follows:

NOUS N'IRONS PAS!

Les Bruxellois se sont entendus. Ils ne se rendent pas à la convocation des Allemands. Ils ne vont pas comme des moutons se laisser conduire à la boucherie.

Dans un grand nombre de communes, beaucoup d'hommes ne se sont pas

the walls of Brussels at any moment. Harrowing tales were brought to town and told and retold; every one had the story of some friend, some acquaintance, in some village he knew; it made the terror personal, brought it within the limits of the imagination.

"Do you think they will take men of our class?" a young nobleman asked me one day. He repeated the question a dozen times, and put it to me for days every time that I met him. When a man left his home he never knew, his family did not know, that it was not for the last time; there, ever before all eyes, was the vision, the slave-pen, the long ride in open freight-wagons in that bitter cold to Germany, the mines, the quarries, or perhaps the front and the trenches. For it was known that the men taken from Tournai had been sent to dig trenches; it was known by the German *affiche* commanding the men of Tournai

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présentés; ils n'ont pas été inquiétés. Ceux qui s'y sont rendus seuls ont été emmenés.

Honte à ceux qui se présentent par égoïsme, parce qu'ils ont un certificat de complaisance, ou parce qu'ils sont certains d'être laissés en liberté.

Tous pour chacun! chacun pour tous!

Un Belge qui travaille pour l'Allemagne se bat contre sa Patrie.

Qu'ils organisent la chasse à l'homme, nous nous cacherons.

PERSONNE NE SE PRÉSENTERA.

Les Bruxellois se souviendront de MAX!

L'honneur de la Patrie est en leurs mains.

VIVE LA PATRIE! VIVE LE ROI!
NOUS N'IRONS PAS!!!

Translation

WE WILL NOT GO!

The people of Brussels are agreed. They do not obey the summons of the Germans. They are not going to allow themselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter.

In a large number of communes many men have not presented themselves; they have not been disturbed. Only those who have handed themselves over have been sent away.

Shame on those who present themselves out of selfishness, because they have a certificate of compliance or because they are certain to be given their liberty.

All for each! each for all!

A Belgian who works for the Germans fights against his country.

Let them organize the man-hunt; we shall hide ourselves.

NO ONE WILL PRESENT HIMSELF.

The people of Brussels will remember MAX!

The honour of the country is in their hands.

LONG LIVE THE COUNTRY! LONG LIVE THE KING!
WE WILL NOT GO!!!

to report. "*Ils ne seront pas exposés au feu continu,*" that order concluded.*

Written appeals poured into the Legation; pathetic notes and letters in French, in Flemish, looking to America in the latest hour of agony. Women came in person, often tramping in from distant villages, to tell of husbands and sons torn from their homes, boxed like cattle in freight-trains, and sent off—they knew not where.

I received hundreds of letters, pleading, imploring protection; men wished to be attached to the Legation so that they might have diplomatic immunity; women came to ask that I take their sons into my home and give them asylum; there were innumerable requests for the cards issued by the C.R.B. testifying that the bearer was employed in the *ravitaillement*, and therefore immune. I even had anonymous letters threatening me if I did not, or if America did not, intervene and stop the press-gangs. Men were quite beside themselves with fear.

Nothing else was talked of, and when men spoke of the Germans it was with deeper hatred in their tone. The story of the seizures took form and detail; men were herded into rooms, under-officers told them off, pronouncing two words that came to have a sinister and fatal meaning:

"*Links, Recht.*"

Those to whom the word "*Links*" was spoken passed out one door; those to whom "*Recht*" was spoken passed out another; the first meant slavery, the second liberty—at least for the time being; sometimes the slave-gang came a second time to the village. Then, wives wailing and screaming, dragging themselves on their knees to the feet of the Uhlans, who, with their crops, whipped them off like dogs. Men and women shuddered at the mere phrase "*envoyé en Allemagne.*" To complete the horror, the weather grew more and more bitterly cold. Every day train-loads of men swept by, the men crowded like cattle in open cars, without overcoats, without food, seized and taken off before they had had time to provide themselves for the dreadful journey. And yet invariably they went singing "La Brabançonne" or "La Marseillaise," and shouting:

"*Nous ne signerons pas!*"

* *Vide* p. 284.

Living in this constant fear, this implacable terror of the morrow, men went heavily clothed, for those taken had to leave with what they had on their backs. Many carried large sums on their persons to be used in bribing the soldiers so that they would release them or connive at their escape after they had been taken.

For the net indeed seemed to be closing in; one day in the middle of November it had been said that the impressments were to begin the following day in the *banlieues* of Brussels—in the communes of Auderghem, Forest, and Uccle.

Sometimes there were rumours, born no doubt of the need of hope; one of them was that President Wilson had sent an ultimatum to Germany saying that if the policy of enslaving Belgians was not abandoned, and the men returned to their homes within twenty-four hours, America would break off diplomatic relations with Germany, that there was nothing to be gained by equivocation, that the President had all the facts from his Minister in Brussels.

"*Qu'est-ce que l'Amérique fabrique?*" every one asked.

Herbert Spencer says somewhere that in every rumour there is some basis in fact, though the rule did not seem to be without its exception with our experience in Brussels, and there was truth in so much of that rumour as said that the President had all the facts from his Minister in Brussels, who had a cablegram from Washington approving the course he had followed, and saying that Mr. Grew had been instructed to make representations on the basis of the keen interest that the American Government felt in the Belgian civil population, and that the German Government had promised an explanation.

Then hope, for a space, returned again. The brave Lemonnier, having once refused to give up the lists of the *chômeurs* in Brussels, had been arrested for his resistance, but when the Germans could not daunt him he had been released again. He with his échevins had come to see Villalobar and me, not for himself—he never asked anything for himself—but to ask if we could not do something to lighten the lot of M. Max, who, the report was, had been transferred to the cell of a common felon at Berlin.

Days passed; the hope grew. But German purpose is as inflexible as German patience is limitless. A plan once formed is never abandoned, and one day suddenly the burgomasters of

Greater Brussels and of Brabant received an identical circular. It was not posted on the walls, but it was no secret; it was the first explicit declaration that the turn of Brussels had come. The brutal letter ordered the communes "to be ready to hand over the unemployed to be taken away." *

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* GOUVERNEMENT DE BRUXELLES ET DU BRABANT,
No. 2766, 1 b. BRUXELLES, *le 12 novembre* 1916.

AVIS À TOUS LES BOURGMESTRES DU GRAND-BRUXELLES ET DU BRABANT

Ce n'est pas la population belge qui profitera le moins de l'ordre donné par M. le Gouverneur général de transporter en Allemagne les sans-travail et les chômeurs volontaires qui sont à charge de l'assistance publique. Les classes laborieuses réduites à l'inaction depuis des années trouveront en Allemagne des salaires rémunérateurs, qu'elles ne peuvent trouver en Belgique, en raison principalement du manque de matières premières.

Il est du devoir de toutes les administrations communales belges de prêter leur aide à l'exécution des mesures. Tous les bourgmestres doivent immédiatement remettre au Kreischef—pour le Grand-Bruxelles à la Kommandantur—les listes exigées des ouvriers n'ayant pas d'occupation suffisante. Les communes doivent s'attendre de jour en jour, à partir de cette date, à préparer leurs chômeurs au départ.

Dans les communes où les listes ne seront pas fournies en temps voulu, l'administration allemande choisira elle-même les hommes à transporter en Allemagne. Mais elle n'a ni le temps ni les moyens de faire une enquête sur la situation de chaque personne. Si donc, au cours de ce choix, il se produit des cas pénibles ou des erreurs, la responsabilité en retombera sur les bourgmestres qui auront refusé d'aider l'administration allemande. J'insiste sur le fait que les ouvriers une fois transportés en Allemagne ne pourront revenir en Belgique que dans des cas exceptionnels d'extrême urgence ou justifiés par des raisons irrécusables.

Je sévirai avec la plus extrême rigueur contre les bourgmestres qui ne dresseront pas les listes ou qui les dresseront avec négligence, et cela non pas seulement pour désobéissance aux ordres allemands, mais aussi pour avoir méconnu leur devoir vis-à-vis de la population commise à leurs soins.

Der Gouverneur von Brüssel und Brabant,
HÜRT, *Generalleutnant.*

Translation

GOVERNMENT OF BRUSSELS AND OF BRABRANT,
No. 2766, 1 b. BRUSSELS, *November* 12, 1916.

NOTICE TO ALL THE MAYORS OF GREATER BRUSSELS AND OF BRABANT

It is not the Belgian population that will profit the least by the order issued by the Governor-General to transport to Germany the unemployed and those who refuse to work, and are a charge on public charity. The working classes, reduced to idleness for years, will find in Germany remunerative wages, which, principally because of the lack of raw materials, they cannot find in Belgium.

It is the duty of all the Belgian communal administrations to lend their aid to the execution of these measures. All the burgomasters must immediately transmit to the Kreischef—in the case of Greater Brussels to the Kommandantur—the required lists of working men not having sufficient employment. The communes from this date must be ready from day to day to prepare their unemployed for departure.

In the communes where the lists are not furnished within the required time,

There was no hesitation, just time enough to meet in joint session, and the burgomasters of the fifteen communes of Greater Brussels sent a reply, saying that they could not deliver to the German authorities the names of fellow-citizens to be torn from their families and constrained to forced labour in Germany without violating their consciences and their duty to their country.*

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the German administration itself will choose the men to be transported to Germany. However, it has neither the time nor the means to inquire into the situation of each person. If then, when the choice is made, there should be unfortunate cases, or errors, the responsibility for them will fall on those burgomasters who refuse to aid the German administration. I call attention to the fact that, once transported to Germany, workmen will be able to return to Belgium only in exceptional cases of extreme urgency, or those justified by irrefutable reasons.

I shall proceed with the most extreme rigour against those burgomasters who do not draw up lists or who draw them up negligently, and that not only because of disobedience to the German orders, but also for having failed in their duty toward the population committed to their care.

GOVERNOR HURT, *Lieutenant-General.*

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Cabinet du Bourgmestre,
U 7831.

ADMINISTRATION COMMUNALE DE BRUXELLES,
le 16 novembre 1916.

MONSIEUR LE COMMANDANT DE LA PLACE DE BRUXELLES,—À la suite de l'audience du 14 novembre 1916, les Bourgmestres de l'Agglomération bruxelloise nous ont donné mandat de vous faire connaître, en leur nom, aussi bien qu'au nôtre, que nous estimons ne pouvoir déférer à l'invitation qui nous a été faite de dresser les listes des ouvriers chômeurs que nous aurions à remettre à l'autorité allemande.

Nous ne pouvons que nous en rapporter aux diverses raisons qui nous ont déjà été produites à l'appui de cette décision. Avant tout, nous pensons que nous ne pourrions, sans méconnaître à la fois la voix de notre conscience et nos devoirs envers notre Patrie, livrer à l'autorité allemande les noms de concitoyens qui vont être arrachés à leurs familles pour être soumis en Allemagne à un travail forcé.

En nous exprimant ainsi, nous avons la conviction d'être les interprètes des sentiments unanimes de la population tout entière.

Agréez, Monsieur le Commandant, l'assurance de notre parfaite considération.

Le Secrétaire du Collège,
M. VAUTHIER.

Le Collège échevinal,
MAURICE LEMONNIER.

Translation

Office of the Mayor,
U 7831.

COMMUNAL ADMINISTRATION OF BRUSSELS,
BRUSSELS, *November 16, 1916.*

MR. COMMANDER,—Following the meeting of November 14, 1916, the Mayors of Greater Brussels have authorized us to inform you in their name as well as in our own that we are of the opinion that we cannot accede to your request to prepare lists of workmen without employment to be remitted to the German authorities.

We can but refer again to the different reasons that have already been

And Brussels waited in that agony of fear, the shadow of which lay on every home, even the most luxurious. I recall one of them; there were pictures by Rubens and Van Dyck on the wall, and an exquisite refinement of taste in the *objets d'art* all about. We sat in silence after dinner; there was no expression for this monstrous thing, beyond that of one of the gentlemen present, who sat gazing vacantly before him, and from time to time, all unconsciously, saying as if to himself:

"*Quelle horreur! Quelle horreur!*"

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cited in support of this decision. First and foremost, we think that we could not deliver to the German authorities the names of fellow-citizens who are to be torn from their families, to be constrained to forced labour in Germany, without misinterpreting the voice of our conscience and our duties to our country.

In expressing ourselves thus we are convinced that we are voicing the unanimous sentiments of the entire population.

Accept, Mr. Commander, the assurances of our high consideration.

Secretary of Council,
M. VAUTHIER.

The Council of Aldermen,
MAURICE LEMONNIER.

To the Commanding Officer of the City of Brussels.

Cabinet du Bourgmestre,
U 7698.

ADMINISTRATION COMMUNALE DE BRUXELLES,
BRUXELLES, *le* 27 *octobre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—J'ai l'honneur de communiquer à Votre Excellence copie de la lettre que le Collège échevinal de Bruxelles a adressée à l'autorité allemande, au sujet des listes de chômeurs.

Je prie Votre Excellence d'agréer les assurances nouvelles de ma haute considération.

Le Bourgmestre f.f.,
M. LEMONNIER.

À Son Excellence Monsieur Brand Whitlock,
Ministre des États-Unis, Bruxelles.

U-7682. *le* 26 *octobre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE COMMANDANT,—Nous avons l'honneur de répondre à votre lettre du 20 octobre 1916, n° 11 M.P. 2515, par laquelle vous nous demandez d'établir une liste des ouvriers actuellement inoccupés.

Nous ne possédons pas une liste de ce genre et nous ne pourrions dès lors vous la fournir.

Vous nous faites observer que le relevé des ouvriers sans travail est rendu nécessaire par des considérations d'intérêt général.

La population n'ayant pas cessé d'être parfaitement calme, nous devons supposer que les circonstances que vous invoquez sont exclusivement d'ordre politique.

Nous pensons que les Administrations communales ne sauraient être tenues de prêter leur concours au pouvoir occupant pour la réalisation de toutes les mesures que celui-ci estime être commandées par des circonstances de cette nature.

Nous ne saurions oublier, en outre, que des promesses ont été faites par les autorités allemandes occupant la Belgique; ces promesses garantissaient à nos

XXXIII. THE PRESS-GANGS

As in looking over my notes and reading memoranda furnished me at the time, I live over again those terrible days of the autumn and winter of 1916, with their darkness and their cold and their hourly tale of horror, I wonder how we ever lived through them at all. The pitiless and insensate cruelty, the brutal indifference to all human rights and human dignity that characterized this restoration of human slavery in our time, the violence to every

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concitoyens, de la part du Gouvernement allemand, une complète liberté de travail et elles nous ont inspiré une entière confiance.

Vous trouverez ci-annexées les réponses des quinze communes de l'Agglomération bruxelloise.

Agréez, Monsieur le Commandant, l'assurance de notre parfaite considération.

LE COLLÈGE ÉCHEVINAL DE LA VILLE DE BRUXELLES.

À Monsieur le Commandant de la Place de Bruxelles.

Translation

Office of the Mayor,
U 7698.

COMMUNAL ADMINISTRATION OF BRUSSELS,
BRUSSELS, *October* 27, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—I have the honour to transmit herewith to Your Excellency a copy of the letter which the Council of Aldermen of Brussels has addressed to the German authorities regarding the lists of unemployed.

I beg Your Excellency to accept the renewed assurances of my high consideration.

Acting Mayor,
M. LEMONNIER.

To His Excellency Mr. Brand Whitlock,
Minister of the United States, Brussels.

U 7682. *October* 26, 1916.

MR. COMMANDANT,—We have the honour to reply to your letter of October 20, 1916, No. 11 M.P. 2515, by which you asked us to forward a list of workers at the present time without employ. We do not possess a list of this nature and we could not, for that reason, furnish you with it.

You call our attention to the fact that the statement of unemployed workmen is made necessary by considerations of general interest. As the population has not ceased to be perfectly calm we must suppose that the circumstances which you invoke are exclusively of a political nature. We think that the communal administrations could not be obliged to lend their assistance to the occupying Power to carry out all the measures that the latter deems necessary through circumstances of this nature.

We could not forget, above all, that promises had been given by the German authorities occupying Belgium. These promises guaranteed to our fellow-citizens, on the part of the German Government, a complete liberty of work. These promises have inspired us with complete confidence.

You will find enclosed the replies of the fifteen communes of Greater Brussels.

We are, sir, etc.,

THE COUNCIL OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF BRUSSELS.

To the Military Commandant of Brussels.

moral sentiment and the strain imposed upon the sympathies by the ruthless deeds that were all about us, made those days in many ways the saddest that Belgium had endured. There were no words for it then; there are none now. I could only write to my Government that it was enough to cause one to despair of the future of the human race, and find the words weak and inadequate to the expression of all that I felt, all that I suffered, and know something like shame that I could write calmly of it at all in the cold and formal terms of an official report. Better, I often thought, yield to the constant and importunate temptation to cry out against it, in some hot flash of rage and indignation, to have done with the too polite expressions of diplomacy, to call things, for once in the world, by their right name, and, when one meant slavery to say slavery instead of deportation. But we were still officially neutral, we of America, and in any position of public responsibility one must think of many things at a time. And there was always the *ravitaillement*, to which I had clung that those poor wronged people might at least have their daily bread, that the brave little race that had had the excruciating and immortal honour to stand in history as the symbol of heroic resistance to tyranny might live, and with it the liberty which it had conquered so long before and in which it had felt itself so secure.

The policy of carrying off into slavery the people of a conquered territory was characteristic of the military chiefs who celebrated their accession to undisputed power in Germany by its inauguration, and they carried it out amid the amazement and horror of the civilized world, with brutal accompaniments that affirmed the essentially savage qualities of their creed. And that no hideous detail might be wanting, with a face of brass they justified it by hypocrisies that were as revolting as the acts they sought to excuse.

A description of the deeds of those field-grey press-gangs in any one of the lovely little villages of Flanders or Brabant might serve as a résumé of what went on everywhere, if it were not for the fact that the slight difference in detail and method, marking the varied taste and the virtuosity in cruelty of local commandants, throws a flood of light on the essentially irresponsible nature of the whole German organization. The earlier pretence that they were taking only those men who were living in idleness

on the charity of their absent Government was abandoned even as soon as it was put forth. It is perhaps well that it was, since that position was as untenable under international law and the code of morals professed by every nation that had a sovereign and a seal, as the indiscriminate slave-driving that followed. And the excuse that the men wished to labour was equally stupid and void, for the men would not work when offered it, and were not even shown the consideration inspired by those economic motives which, when human motives were wanting, once led masters to feed their slaves sufficiently to support them in a physical state fit for labour. And if, among the intellectual classes of Germany, among journalists or priests or pastors or professors, among bourgeois or working men, or even Socialists preaching Karl Marx's evangel of the dignity and authority and international solidarity of labour, there was any objection or any opposition, any moral repugnance anywhere in the German nation, then or later, it never found, so far as I know, any public voice or utterance. I was told that Bissing disapproved, and that certain of his henchmen disapproved, and I heard stories to the effect that soldiers in executing the orders actually wept at the scenes they were compelled to witness, and that even certain officers turned away in shame; but not one ever gave any public expression to the sentiments that did them such unusual credit.

The policy, in defiance, one would say, of the Conventions of The Hague, if it did not seem ridiculous to invoke again those mutilated charters wherein short years ago we thought to record the progress of the human species, had been instituted, as I have shown, as early as 1915 in the zone of operations, that inferno whose history will not be written until its rightful occupants shall have been released to recount their hideous sufferings. But that was not surprising; anything was to be expected of the Operationsgebiet. It spread up into the lowlands of Flanders where old men of the Landsturm were quartered in peasants' homes, living in some sort of understanding under a *modus vivendi* by which they got on well enough, carrying water for the housewives, helping with the household tasks, able to converse in those vocables that are so much alike in Flemish and in Low German, and perhaps paving the way, as Bissing shrewdly divined, to some sort of understanding with the population; which he

hoped by his subtle schemes to turn to the Imperial advantage later on.

But the Governor-General's determination to bring happiness to the unemployed of Belgium in spite of themselves by the humane compulsions of the press-gang, was not, as the Governor-General might have anticipated, appreciated by the people, and there were presented to him many protests, the first of which was that of the great Cardinal himself.

As early as October 19, when the news of the deportations was spreading abroad, His Eminence had written to the Governor-General a letter which he sent to the Baron von der Lancken to be delivered to his chief. The Cardinal's note transmitting the protest to the Baron contained a paragraph of the highest spirit, which itself would have disposed of all the Governor-General's specious reasons, if the Cardinal could have got his letter published.

"I hope," he wrote to Baron von der Lancken,* "that you will employ all your influence with the superior authorities to avoid such an outrage. And do not talk to us, I beg you, of the need of protecting domestic order, or of alleviating the burdens of public charity. Spare us that bitter irony. You know well that public order is not threatened, and that all the moral and civil influences would lend you spontaneously their aid if it were in danger. The unemployed are not a burden on official charity, and it is not your money that aids them."

Von Bissing had no sooner received and replied to the Cardinal s protest, and then read the Cardinal's rejoinder, than he was involved in another correspondence, this time with the working men themselves, who, on October 30, through the Socialist organizations and the independent labour unions, protested against the deportations. The Governor-General replied on November 3, and the working men rejoined on November 14,† and the six documents that compose this correspondence express not only the two parties to the conflict, but set side by side in the light of their bright contrast, the two systems that are grappling in the world to-day. The Governor-General's views were published in Belgium, but those of his opponents and victims were not, though they found their way at last into the freer and

* See note 1 on p. 286.

† See note 2 on p. 304.

more luminous world outside. There were other protests, too, to which the Governor-General did not reply, that of November 2, signed by the Senators and Deputies of the district of Mons,* that of November 9, signed by the Belgian Senators and Deputies present in Brussels at that time,† that of November 11, presented by the judicial leaders and members of the Belgian Bar,‡ that of November 14, signed by the Senators and Deputies of the Province of Liége,§ that of November 17, signed by the Burgomaster and Échevins of Brussels,‖ and that of the Mayor and Échevins of Charleroi on November 18.¶ There was another protest, addressed to the American Minister at Brussels, the most touching, in many respects, of all, because it was signed by authorized representatives of all the women's societies in Belgium. It spoke out of the hearts of the mothers of the land,** and represented a refined culture beyond the imagination of the Power whose cruelties it condemned.

These protests themselves tell the whole story of the shameless and wicked business, and I have given perhaps, in dwelling so long on personal events of far less importance than the great tragedy to which they were ancillary, some glimpse of what was going on in those obscure villages where the slave-gangs were plying their hideous and heinous trade. We ourselves had had, indeed, only glimpses, for news, when it dealt with German deeds, travelled slowly and circumspectly in Belgium in those days, and the details were long in reaching us. They came in slowly, bit by bit, and even then did not tell half of the dreadful story that some day will be told in Belgium.

There lies before me as I write, a letter written in Flemish by the sister of the cook in a certain home in Brussels. The woman who penned this letter sent it, as its contents reveal, by stealth from her village in Flanders, and the master of the house where its recipient cooked gave it me. I cannot read it in the original, but it was translated for me, literally, word for word, out of its poor faulty Flemish into French, and from the French I have tried to put it into English, as literally as may be, so that it might retain some flavour of its original. To me it has all the

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* See note 3 on p. 312.
† See note 4 on p. 321.
‡ See note 5 on p. 326.
§ See note 6 on p. 327.
‖ See note 7 on p. 331.
¶ See note 8 on p. 336.
** See note 9 on p. 342.

pathos that is part of the fate of the poor in all lands. It gives an impression, however vague, of the sorrow and despair that were in all those little cots with the red tiles scattered over Belgium. This is the letter:

DEAR SISTER,—I write you these few lines to let you know that we are all in good health and hope you are the same. I have lots of news for you, but it is not very good. Without doubt you have already heard that the young men who were on the Committee * have had to go away to work, but without knowing where. They say they must go to work in Germany. Saturday Albert received his letter and Frans of your brother Alois,† also. You can imagine that it was not very agreeable to us to see them all go away like that. Just think, 465 boys from Hamme alone, and Monday they all had to go to Termonde, and there they locked them up with 2800 others in the barracks until now, Thursday. This morning they went away on the train, we think for Germany, but we don't know yet. Sunday we sewed all day to prepare their clothes, which they must take with them, two comforters to cover them, two working suits, two shirts, two pairs of socks, two vests, a towel, a bowl to eat out of, a fork, a spoon, a knife, two pairs of socks and lots of little things, and enough to eat for two days. They had to have all that.

So you may see what sad days we passed this week. Last Sunday we ran from one shop to another to buy clothes, and everything is so terribly dear. If we had known all that in advance we could have asked the Committee. They have not taken all the workers, whether they have to go or not we don't know. The saddest of all is that at Termonde they received so little to eat. Alice and her father went to Termonde for two days with a little bread, but they could not even get it to the boys. Everybody was there with food. They sat all day long before the barracks, but they could not get their packages in because of the Germans, and Wednesday morning very early they went back to Termonde and then they gave their packages from Hamme to the gamekeeper and he was able to get them in, but Alice and her father were not able to get very near, but all the same he got his package. Just think what it was down there at Termonde with all those people who could not see their boys. There are some who gave up their last mouthful of bread and all the money they had to give it to their children. So, dear Sister, it is the same thing with our Albert and I had to buy it all without anybody giving me a penny, but I could not let him go without a penny in his pocket. It is already so little that one can give to them. The Overstraetens, they gave him a comforter, without that I would have had to buy it myself.

So you can see what it was. All these boys had to run with that sort of pack on their back. They say that they will be able to write. I don't know whether it is true. As soon as I know where they are I shall let you know. Now I am going to close and I shall wait for a reply by D—— G—— who will give this letter to you, and I hope that Madame received my other letter that I sent her a fortnight ago.

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* Literally, as in English, i.e. living on the Committee.
† Nephew of the recipient.

Now my compliments to Monsieur and Madame and to the children of Alice and of us all.

Your sister, LEONTINE.

This letter was written in the first days, when the seizures were all in Flanders—remote, inaccessible, *incommunicado*, governed by the whim of Obersts and Feldwebels and Kreischefs. It began there, as I have said; Hellfrisch had just made his declaration on forced labour in the occupied territories in the Reichstag, where it was received with docile acquiescence. I remember how at the time I imagined what would happen if Mr. Lloyd George should rise in the House of Commons, or Mr. Kitchin in the House of Congress, and casually announce that the Government had decided to seize men in their homes, deport them to another land, and set them to work in mines and quarries and factories! . . .

The declaration in the Reichstag was hardly made before the *affiches* were posted all over Flanders ordering the men to report. The very next day the men were sent away—" God knows where," said the man who brought in the news. He came with the story of Alost. There the men " capable of bearing arms "—nothing was said there about *chômeurs*—were summoned by *affiche* on Thursday, October 12, to present themselves the following day. About seventeen hundred men, between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, were assembled. They were examined by the Germans precisely as slaves would be examined in the slave mart, their muscles pinched and tested, and about four hundred who appeared physically unfit were thus eliminated. The remaining thirteen hundred were locked up at Alost, and a second examination eliminated about three hundred more. The thousand who remained were imprisoned, and the military authorities by force compelled the Burgomaster to announce to them that they need not fear, that they would be utilized only for work on the railways. The men were then released and told to appear on the 16th, bringing certain clothes and effects.

However, on the following Monday, the 16th, instead of the thousand, less than six hundred appeared. Of these the married men were released, and the remaining, about four hundred, were given a paper to sign. The paper was in German, and the military refused to translate it or to explain its contents. The men, all of them, refused to sign, and were again locked up. What

happened after that the man did not know, but two trains filled with young men went away, and the young men were singing "La Brabançonne" and "De Leeuw van Vlaanderen."

Later we learned of their fate. The men seized at Alost were not deported to Germany, but were taken to France in the region of the Somme, a few hours from the firing-line. There they were set to work making a grade for a railroad line; at night they were locked up in an unused factory building, and as they were given little to eat the French used to come and throw bits of food over the walls for the Belgians. Some of the French were punished for this charity by fines of from twenty to fifty marks, and afterward they would place food on the side of the road along which the prisoners were led when they went to their work. Despite the prohibition of the military authorities the French continued to help the Belgians in many ways, and it was due to their efforts that two young men from Alost, brothers, twenty and twenty-two years of age, were able to escape and, making their way on foot, at last to reach Brussels. They had made their escape one day when aviators came to throw bombs on the railway line they were building; the German guards ran to cover, and the two Belgian boys seized the moment to flee. They wore, like all the other enslaved Belgians, yellow brassards to distinguish them from the French, who wore red brassards, but some Frenchmen gave them red brassards, and with these to avert suspicion they escaped, lay in hiding all day, and at night set forth on foot. They reached Brussels, as I have said, and finally got back to Alost. They said that when they were first seized they were asked to sign contracts to work, which they refused to do. They were deprived of their food, but would not yield; then they were beaten until they were black and blue all over, but they never signed the contracts. The Germans tried to force one Belgian of their party, who had refused to work, to take up a pick; they tied his hands to the implement, but he said though they cut his hands off he would never yield. This man had been so brutally treated that the two boys thought he would never live to see Belgium again. The Germans in speaking of the Belgians called them *Banditen* or *schlechtes Volk*.

The paper the men had been asked to sign was, no doubt, an agreement to labour that would invest the transaction with the innocent and legal aspect of a voluntary contract of employment.

The Germans laid great stress on this contract in the earlier days of the press; they sought by threats, by cuffs, and blows of gun-stocks, to force the men to sign it, and frequently tried hunger—indeed, did starve some of the men into signing it—and exhibited the contracts afterward as proof of the Belgian willingness to work. But later this effort to make the transaction appear normal and legal was abandoned, and the "contracts" were heard of no more.

There seemed to be in those early days of the slavery some regard for the appearances; and a resort to tricks and subterfuges that resembled the stupid cunning of maniacs. For instance, at Roulers, which was in the Etappen, when the Belgians, presenting themselves in the customary way for control at the Meldeamt, showed their cards of identity, the Germans seized and stamped the cards, or the cards of such of the men as appeared able to perform manual labour, with the words "*Freiwillige Arbeiter,*" and having thus, after a German fashion, transformed them into willing workers, they sent them off to dig a fourth-line trench from Staden to Ostend. A man from Flanders told me that near the scene where they laboured there was a large sign labelled "*Freiwillige Arbeiter.*"

The workmen living along the Roulers–Dixmude railway line, which extends as far as Zarren, were allowed to return to their homes every evening. They went to and came from their place of work penned in flat cars. They were exposed to all weathers, shivered from the cold, were wet to the skin, and they made the journey thus twice each day. "A cattle-breeder, in taking care of his live stock," said the man, "would not permit them to travel under such conditions." At first these workmen had been transported in closed cars, but on December 20 an *affiche* announced that if they continued to deface the cars the military authorities would be forced to have them transported in uncovered cars. If they continued to deface the cars! But there had been no complaint of their defacing cars; how could common cattle-cars be defaced? There it was again, the subtle lie, the detestable trick, threatening as punishment for something that had not been done something the Germans themselves wished to do, and the next day the announced punishment was inflicted.

The factory where these men worked for the Germans was situated at a very short distance from the front. The men

toiled there under the fire of the Allied armies, and several of them were wounded. Under these conditions it was evident that the work they performed must have served for military purposes, and, in fact, it was said that they were digging trenches. Those who did not live along the tramway lines between Sichem and Lichtervelde were allowed to return to their homes only once a week, and sometimes only once every fortnight. In the meantime they were lodged in barracks where sanitary conveniences of even the most elementary nature were entirely lacking.

Thursday, October 12, and Friday, the 13th, were sinister dates in the territory of East Flanders, for the seizures were begun everywhere in those days. Two thousand, some said twenty-five hundred, men were locked up in the storehouse of "La Linière Gantoise," a large flax-spinning factory at Ghent. The men, having refused to work for the Germans or to sign the proffered contract, were held there by German troops, and the selection was made after a most cursory examination. They were not all of them unemployed workmen; some of them were clerks or small tradesmen. They were kept imprisoned, huddled together in an insufficient space, with no sanitary arrangements, no place to sleep except the bare and crowded floor, with little or nothing to eat; once a day they were taken out of doors for exercise under a heavy military guard. All the while, by means of threats and every manner of intimidation, the Germans tried to extort from them, if not their signatures to the contract, their oral consent to work. Finally they were shipped off to Germany, and they, too, went singing "La Brabançonne" and "De Leeuw van Vlaanderen."

The shops of Van den Kerkhove were "requisitioned," the directors having declined to permit their plant to work for the Germans. Then the Germans installed German foremen, but the men refused to work under them, or to work for the Germans at all. Then, as a German improvement on the old system of the lock-out, they were locked up and given no food, in order to force them to work for their conquerors. They were closely guarded, but out of the factory windows they used to drop notes which their friends picked up and so learned of their sufferings.

At the old city of Bruges, which, like Ghent, was in the Étape, the effort to induce the labourers to work for the Germans was made in a somewhat different fashion. Toward the end of

September the German authorities ordered the city of Bruges to provide four hundred workmen, in groups of one hundred, " for employment on the West Front." The Burgomaster, Count Vizart, and his colleagues in the municipal administration, replied in the proud spirit of the old free city, saying that it was for the workmen themselves to decide whether they would work for the Germans or not; as for the city fathers, they would neither provide the labourers nor give their names to the German authorities. The German Kommandant then asked, or perhaps ordered, the Burgomaster and the aldermen to appear at his home. They went, and the Kommandant laid down the law; the Germans were masters in Bruges, he said, and as masters they had the right to dictate orders, and the orders were not to be discussed, but to be obeyed.

But it was not in the traditions of Bruges for the municipal authorities to take orders from any one; the whole history of the proud old city had been one long defiance by Burgomaster and aldermen of some truculent overlord. The Burgomaster and the aldermen persisted in their refusal, and the Kommandant informed them that they were dismissed from office; they were to return to their houses and remain there, considering themselves under arrest, and the city of Bruges was to be fined one hundred thousand marks for each day's delay in providing the workmen. The Kommandant, in the German municipal way, had a professional mayor ready, Lieutenant Rogge, a German officer who in time of peace discharged the functions of Burgomaster of Schwerin, and he was detailed as Burgomaster of Bruges.

The Germans then demanded the lists of the *chômeurs*, but M. Henri van Vaillie, who was director of the municipal service for the aid of the unemployed, refused to give the lists without the authorization of the Comité National at Brussels. And so he, too, was arrested at his home and put in prison, whence the Germans took him to the employment bureau, seized the books, and took him back to prison, where, without trial, he was condemned to remain for twenty-eight days and to pay a fine of three thousand marks, or, in default, to spend twenty-eight days longer in prison.

The *Polizei* were then sent to summon the *chômeurs* whose names were on the lists. Workmen, or men who appeared

capable of working, were seized indiscriminately in the streets and at the Meldeamt, where all men between the ages of sixteen and forty-five were compelled to report at intervals. As rapidly as groups of one hundred men were assembled they were put under guard, conducted to the barracks, and on the following day shipped off in the tramway toward Meerbeek, near the Dutch frontier. All along the way weeping women gathered in crowds until German soldiers dispersed them. The Germans were constructing trenches just then along the Dutch border, in fear, it was supposed, of a British invasion from that direction. The men refusing to work in these trenches were imprisoned in a large building and told that those who would not work could not eat. Some of the men, after two days without food, surrendered; others held out longer. The same thing occurred in all the communes near Bruges.

Burgomaster Rogge, however, notwithstanding the fact that he was a professional mayor, did not achieve a very successful administration of the municipal affairs of Bruges; it was not the same thing to govern a Belgian population as to govern a German population, which does as it is told to do. Like some other cities I might mention, Belgian cities are not so easily governed, and after a week the imported professional burgomaster gave up, the Bruges municipal authorities were recalled to their posts—and the city condemned to pay a fine of four hundred thousand marks.

M. van Vaillie was kept in prison until the end of his term; he was treated with all severity, not even permitted to receive visits from his wife and children, and when he had completed the sentence he was fined three hundred marks.

M. Charles Serweytens, formerly president of the commercial court at Bruges, and honorary consul for Norway, had expressed publicly the opinion that it was contrary to international law to force the people to give up their brass and copper utensils—as they were compelled to do all over Belgium—and though he was sixty-five years of age and ill, he was sent off to prison in Germany.

About October 1 the authorities of the city of Tournai, in the province of Hainaut, and the authorities in each of the ninety-one communes in the district known as the Tournaisis, received an identical order to turn over the lists of *chômeurs*. They

all refused. General Hopffer, the Etappen commander, then demanded of each commune its electoral list, and used this list, together with the records of the Meldeamt, to "requisition" all labourers, whether employed or not. On October 11 General Hopffer in an *affiche* announced that these men had been deported.* There were about eight hundred of them. On October 22, because of the attitude of the municipal authorities of Tournai, General Hopffer issued another order commanding the inhabitants of the city to remain indoors from six o'clock in the evening to seven o'clock in the morning.† The following day General Hopffer was out in another *affiche* levying a fine of two hundred thousand

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* This is the *affiche*:

AVIS

Malgré mes ordres et les avertissements réitérés concernant les suites en cas de désobéissance, les ouvriers demandés par l'autorité allemande n'ont pas été mis à ma disposition. Pour cette raison un nombre d'ouvriers de Tournai et de Templeuve ayant refusé à travailler, ainsi que l'échevin Wibaut de Tournai, furent transportés aujourd'hui en Allemagne.

En cas de récidive, d'autres transports et d'autres mesures seront ordonnés.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *le* 11 *octobre* 1916.

Translation

NOTICE

In spite of my orders and the repeated notices concerning the consequences in case of disobedience, the workmen demanded by the German authorities have not been placed at their disposal.

For this reason a number of workmen of Tournai and Templeuve who had refused to work, together with the Alderman Wibaut, of Tournai, were sent to Germany to-day.

In case of obstinacy others will be sent to Germany and other measures adopted.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *October* 11, 1916.

† This is the *affiche*:

AVIS

À cause de l'attitude désobéissante de la ville de Tournai, prouvée par son administration communale, il est défendu aux habitants de Tournai—à part d'autres mesures qui seront prises—de quitter les maisons à partir de 6 heures du soir jusqu'à 7 heures du matin et ceci d'abord jusqu'au dimanche 29 courant y compris. Les magasins, estaminets et cinémas sont à fermer à 6 heures du soir.

Ces mesures ne s'appliquent pas aux employés des ponts, aux agents de police et gardes champêtres, au personnel des chemins de fer vicinaux, des usines à électricité et à gaz.

Des civils venus d'en dehors de Tournai doivent quitter la ville avant 6 heures du soir.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *le* 22 *octobre* 1916.

Translation

NOTICE

On account of the disobedient attitude of the town of Tournai, as evidenced by its communal administration, the inhabitants of Tournai (except in the case of other measures being taken) are forbidden to leave their houses from 6 o'clock

marks on the city of Tournai for the failure of its authorities to hand over the lists of unemployed, and a further fine of twenty thousand marks daily was exacted until the lists were surrendered.*

'Nor was this all; all the communes under the Kommandantur of the Étape of Tournai were notified that they were to be held responsible for the preservation in good condition of the railways within their territory; if any damage were done, and the guilty not denounced to the German military authorities within twenty-four hours, the Mayor of the commune and three prominent citizens would be arrested, joined to a band of workmen or taken to Germany; and at all events, whether the guilty were discovered or not, a fine would be collected from the commune and the inhabitants be held responsible for its payment in kind from their properties.†

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in the evening to 7 o'clock in the morning, until and including Sunday the 29th instant. Shops, cafés, and cinemas must be closed at 6 p.m.

These measures are not applicable to men employed on bridges, to policemen and forest guards, to the employés of the *chemins de fer vicinaux*, of the electric and gas plants.

Civilians from outside of Tournai must leave the town before 6 p.m.—

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *October* 22, 1916.

* This is the *affiche*:

AVIS

Pour le refus de l'Administration de la ville de soumettre les listes de chômeurs, Monsieur le Général Commandant l'armée a infligé à la ville de Tournai une contribution de 200,000 mark, payable en six jours à partir d'aujourd'hui, en ordonnant également que la ville payera en outre journellement la somme de 20,000 mark jusqu'à l'époque où les listes ordonnées se trouveront entre mes mains—ceci d'abord jusqu'au 31 décembre 1916.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *le* 23 *octobre* 1916.

Translation

NOTICE

On account of the refusal of the communal authorities of the town of Tournai to submit the list of unemployed, the commanding general has inflicted a fine of 200,000 marks payable in six days, and also orders the town to pay 20,000 marks daily until the list shall have been submitted to me,—to begin with, until December 31, 1916.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

TOURNAI, *October* 23, 1916.

† This was the notification:

AVIS

OBJET: CHEMINS DE FER

ETAPPENKOMMANDANTUR, TOURNAI,

A TOUTES LES COMMUNES. *le* 17 *octobre* 1916.

Les communes sont responsables de la conservation en bon état du chemin

The municipal authorities and the aldermen of the city of Ath announced to the public by placards that, by order of the German authorities, the local authorities were directed to draw up and hand to the Germans a list of all unemployed in Ath; that those would be considered as unemployed who received any kind of aid from the public charity, and that by the words public charity was meant the aid offered by the Comité de Secours (Commission for Relief). This notice reproduced textually the terms of an order that had been sent by the Germans to the municipal authorities of the city of Ath.*

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de fer se trouvant sur leur territoire. Le chef de la commune a le devoir d'appeler spécialement l'attention de tous les habitants sur ce que la voie ferrée est, dans leur propre intérêt, l'objet le plus à protéger et que tout dommage entraînera les suites les plus graves.

Dans les cas où un tel fait se produirait et que le malfaiteur ne serait pas désigné à l'autorité militaire compétente dans les 24 heures, le Bourgmestre et trois notables de la commune sur le territoire de laquelle l'incident aurait eu lieu seront arrêtés. Ils seront mis dans une compagnie d'ouvriers ou transportés en Allemagne. Si la négligence ou la complicité du Bourgmestre était constatée, une punition des plus rigoureuses sera prononcée immédiatement. L'auteur sera jugé d'après les lois de la guerre.

Dans tous les cas, soit-il que l'auteur soit trouvé ou non, une amende sera infligée à la commune. Les habitants d'une commune répondront sur leurs biens des amendes infligées à la commune.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

Translation

NOTICE

SUBJECT: RAILROADS

ETAPPENKOMMANDANTUR, TOURNAI,
October 17, 1916.

TO ALL COMMUNES.

The communes are made responsible for the safeguarding of the railroads in their territories. The head of the commune must call the particular attention of the inhabitants to the fact that it is to their own best interest to protect the railroad and that any damage done will bring about most serious consequences.

In the case of any such damage being committed, and of the person who commits it not being handed over to the proper military authorities within twenty-four hours, the Mayor and three well-known persons of the commune in whose territory the act shall have been committed will be arrested. They will be placed with a group of workmen or sent to Germany. If the Mayor should be convicted of negligence or complicity the most severe punishment will be inflicted immediately. The author will be judged according to military law.

In any case, whether the author be discovered or not, a fine will be inflicted on the commune and the inhabitants will be responsible for the payment of the fine from their properties.

HOPFFER, *General-Major und Etappenkommandant.*

VILLE D'ATH

AVIS IMPORTANT

Le Collège des Bourgmestre et Échevins de la ville d'Ath porte à la connaissance de ses concitoyens que par ordre de l'autorité militaire allemande il doit dresser et lui remettre une liste de tous les chômeurs d'Ath (hommes),

Mr. Pate, the representative of the C.R.B. at Tournai, gave me a copy of a newspaper, the *Avenir*, published at Tournai, which contained a notice which the authorities of Tournai were compelled by the German military to publish at the time the workmen were

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comprenant nom de famille, prénom, date de naissance, nationalité, profession ou métier.

A cette fin les inscriptions seront reçues à l'hôtel de ville le lundi 23 octobre, dans l'ordre suivant :

De 9 à 10 heures.		Les personnes dont les noms commencent par les lettres A, B et C.
De 10 à 11	,,	Les personnes dont les noms commencent par la lettre D.
De 11 à 12	,,	Les personnes dont les noms commencent par les lettres E, F, G, H, I, J et K.
De 12 à 1	,,	Les personnes dont les noms commencent par les lettres L, M et N.
De 3 à 4	,,	Les personnes dont les noms commencent par les lettres O, P, Q, R et S.
De 4 à 5	,,	Les personnes dont les noms commencent par les lettres T, U, V, W, X, Y et Z.

Sont considérées comme chômeurs, toutes les personnes qui reçoivent un soutien quelconque des soutiens publics. Par soutien public on entend aussi le soutien de la Commission for Relief in Belgium (Comité National de Secours).

Chaque changement dans la situation des chômeurs devra à l'avenir être déclaré à l'Hôtel de Ville, le vendredi de chaque semaine, avant midi.

Les Bourgmestre et Échevins,

O. OUVERLEAUX.

Le Secrétaire,

J. DEGAUQUIER.

ATH. *le* 21 *octobre* 1916.

Translation

TOWN OF ATH

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The municipal authorities inform their fellow-citizens that by order of the military authorities they must prepare and submit a list of all the unemployed men of Ath, including surname, Christian name, date of birth, nationality, profession or trade.

To this end registrations will be received at the Town Hall, Monday, October 23, in the following order :

9–10 o'clock.		Persons whose names begin with the letters A, B, and C.
10–11	,,	Persons whose names begin with the letter D.
11–12	,,	Persons whose names begin with the letters E, F, G, H, I, J, and K.
12– 1	,,	Persons whose names begin with the letters L, M, and N.
3– 4	,,	Persons whose names begin with the letters O, P, Q, R, and S.
4– 5	,,	Persons whose names begin with the letters T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z.

Every person who receives any assistance from the public charities will be considered as unemployed. Assistance given by the Commission for Relief is also considered as public charity

Any change in the situation of the unemployed must in the future be declared at the Town Hall on Friday of each week before noon.

For the Mayor and Aldermen,

O. OUVERLEAUX.

The Secretary,

J. DEGAUQUIER.

ATH, *October* 21, 1916.

seized.* The notice shows that the men were to be employed on work of a military character, which, of course, is quite contrary to the engagements taken by the Powers in the Conventions of The Hague.

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* AVIS

Par ordre de Monsieur le Major Commandant l'Étape à Antoing
(n° 1694 en date du 20 octobre 1916).

Le bureau de travail est ouvert au Secrétariat communal tous les jours entre 10 heures et midi à l'exception des dimanches et jours de fête.

Il est demandé aux ouvriers et ouvrières âgés de 17 à 46 ans de se faire inscrire sur les listes qui seront déposées dans ce bureau.

Les salaires accordés sont fixés comme suit :

(*a*) Pour les ouvriers de métier qui ont plus de 18 ans, par jour, 4 fr. 50, par heure supplémentaire 0 fr. 45.

(*b*) Pour les autres ouvriers, par jour, 3 fr. 50, par heure supplémentaire 0 fr. 35.

Aux ouvriers qui n'ont pas encore 18 ans, il sera accordé le même salaire pourvu qu'ils fournissent un travail correspondant.

La durée du travail est de 10 heures y compris les heures de repas.

Les ouvriers doivent se nourrir à leurs frais.

L'autorité allemande signale qu'on pourra forcer le civil au travail s'il n'y a pas assez d'ouvriers volontaires, par exemple pour les travaux dans les usines, dans les scieries, dans les ateliers, dans les fermes pour les travaux des champs, pour la construction des chemins de fer et des routes.

On ne forcera jamais la population à faire des travaux exposés au feu continu.

MESURES COERCITIVES

En cas de refus de travail il sera prononcé contre chaque personne qui refusera le travail des peines d'amende et de prison, le placement dans un bataillon d'ouvriers civils d'arrêt avec nourriture réduite.

La commune pourra aussi être punie soit par la limitation du commerce, l'imposition des taxes d'amende, etc.

Il est fait remarquer aux bourgmestres qu'il est de leur intérêt et de celui de la commune que les listes des ouvriers soient finies le plus vite possible.

Le Bourgmestre,
BOUZIN,
Président du Bureau du Travail.

Translation

NOTICE

By order of the Commandant of the Étape of Antoing
(No. 1694, dated October 20, 1916).

The office of the communal secretary of Labour is open between ten and twelve o'clock with the exception of Sundays and holidays.

Labourers, male and female, between the ages of seventeen and forty-six years are asked to enter their names in the lists which are placed in this office for that purpose.

The wages which will be paid are as follows :

(*a*) For labourers who are over eighteen years of age and who have a trade, 4 fr. 50 per day, 0 fr. 45 per hour for each hour overtime.

(*b*) For other labourers 3 fr. 50 per day, 0 fr. 35 for each supplementary hour.

Workmen under eighteen years of age will be paid the same wages if they can do a corresponding amount of work.

The working day consists of ten hours including meal-time.

The workmen must feed themselves.

The German authorities announce that the civil population may be forced

The whole region of the Tournaisis was in rage, terror, and despair. The men there were being constantly seized, and all the while trains were passing filled with those who, during the stops at the station, told the Tournaisiens standing by that they had come from the two Flanders, and that they were being taken, not to Germany, but to France. Under the constant and excessive exactions of General Hopffer the city authorities of Tournai were in a most difficult position; they would not yield to the menaces, and they knew not which way to turn to obtain the funds for the fines that were the penalty of their resistance. They could only refuse again to surrender the lists and formally notify their insatiable tyrant that they had no more money with which to pay the tribute he so mercilessly exacted. But even their firm position could not protect their citizens; the lists seemed to be more a matter of pride than of necessity to the Germans, for the seizures went on uninterruptedly, the press-gangs were busily at work. Mr. Pate told me that by November 4 twenty-five thousand men had been taken. They were ordered first to work at Ramignies-Chin, near Tournai, where an aviation field was being constructed, and when they refused they were sent toward the front in France and there they were left without food. Hunger, indeed, was a weapon constantly employed. The Germans took a hundred and fifty French workmen to work on that aviation field at Ramignies-Chin—a terrible place, by all accounts—and starved them into accepting the conditions they imposed. And even then the Germans gave them only a half-ration, and the Belgians in the village took pity on the French and shared their own scanty provisions with them. There were five hundred French prisoners in the village of Blandin

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to work if there are not enough volunteers to work in the factories, in sawmills, in workshops, to work on farms, and to construct highways and railroads.

' The population will never be forced to do any work where they will be exposed to uninterrupted fire.

COMPULSORY MEASURES

Whoever refuses to work will be punished by fines, by imprisonment, by being placed in a corps of workmen with reduced food allowance.

The commune may also be punished either by limiting its commerce, imposition of fines, etc.

The mayors are informed that it is in their interest and in the interest of the commune that these lists of workmen be furnished as soon as possible.

The Mayor,
BOUZIN,
President of the Bureau of Labour.

who also refused to work, and they were subjected to similar tortures.

NOTES

NOTE 1 (see p. 271).

MALINES, *le 19 octobre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE BARON,—J'ai l'honneur d'envoyer à Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing une lettre dont je joins ici une copie.

Monsieur le Gouverneur général a exprimé tant de fois, même publiquement, sa volonté de réserver une large part de sa sollicitude aux intérêts du pays occupé; vous-même, Monsieur le Baron, avez si souvent affirmé le désir des autorités allemandes de ne pas perpétuer, sous le régime d'occupation, l'état de guerre des premiers jours, que je ne puis croire à la mise à exécution des mesures dont votre Gouvernement menace les ouvriers réduits, bien malgré eux, au chômage.

J'espère que vous userez de toute votre influence auprès des autorités supérieures afin de prévenir un pareil attentat.

Et ne nous parlez pas, je vous prie, du besoin de protéger l'ordre intérieur ou d'alléger les charges de la bienfaisance publique. Épargnez-nous cette amère ironie. Vous savez bien que l'ordre n'est pas menacé et que toutes les influences morales et civiles vous prêteraient spontanément main-forte s'il était en danger. Les chômeurs ne sont pas à la charge de la bienfaisance officielle; ce n'est pas de vos finances que leur vient le secours.

Jugez s'il n'y va pas de l'intérêt de l'Allemagne autant que du nôtre, de respecter les engagements souscrits par deux hautes personnalités de votre Empire.

J'ai confiance que mes efforts auprès de M. le Gouverneur général et auprès de vous ne seront ni mal interprétés ni méconnus, et je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Baron, l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus distingués.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archevêque de Malines.*

À Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken,
Chef du département politique près le Gouverneur général, Bruxelles.

Translation

MALINES, *October* 19, 1916.

BARON,—I have the honour to send to His Excellency the Baron von Bissing a letter of which I add here a copy.

The Governor-General has expressed many times, even publicly, his wish to reserve a large part of his solicitude for the interest of the occupied country. Yourself, Baron, have so often affirmed the desire of the German authorities not to perpetuate, under the regime of occupation, the state of war of the first days, that I cannot believe that the measures by which your Government menaces the working men reduced, in spite of themselves, to unemployment, will be placed in execution.

I hope that you will use all your influence with superior authorities in order to prevent such an outrage.

And do not talk to us, I beg you, of the need of protecting domestic order or of alleviatng the burdens of public charity. Spare us that bitter irony. You know well that public order is not threatened, and that all the moral and civil influences would lend you spontaneously their aid if it were in danger. The unemployed are not a burden on official charity, and it is not your money that aids them.

Consider if it is not in the interest of Germany, as much as in our own, to respect engagements signed by two high personalities of your Empire.

I have confidence that my efforts with the Governor-General and with

you will not be misinterpreted or misunderstood, and I beg you to accept, Baron, the expression of my most distinguished sentiments.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archbishop of Malines.*

To Baron von der Lancken,
Chief of the Political Department under the Governor-General, Brussels.

ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE MALINES,
MALINES, *le* 19 *octobre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL,—Au lendemain de la capitulation d'Anvers, la population affolée se demandait ce qu'il adviendrait des Belges en âge de porter les armes ou qui arriveraient à cet âge avant la fin de l'occupation. Les supplications des pères et mères de famille me déterminèrent à interroger M. le Gouverneur d'Anvers, le Baron von Huene, qui eut l'obligeance de me rassurer et de m'autoriser à rassurer les parents angoissés. Le bruit s'était répandu à Anvers, cependant, qu'à Liége, à Namur, à Charleroi, des jeunes gens avaient été saisis et emmenés de force en Allemagne. Je priai donc M. le Gouverneur von Huene de vouloir me confirmer par écrit la garantie, qu'il m'avait déjà donnée verbalement, que rien de pareil ne s'effectuerait à Anvers. Il me répondit tout de suite que les bruits relatifs aux déportations étaient sans fondement et, sans hésiter, me remit par écrit, entre autres déclarations, la suivante :

> "Les jeunes gens n'ont point à craindre d'être emmenés en Allemagne, soit pour y être enrôlés dans l'armée, soit pour y être employés à des travaux forcés."

Cette déclaration écrite et signée fut communiquée publiquement au clergé et aux fidèles de la province d'Anvers, ainsi que Votre Excellence pourra s'en assurer par le document ci-inclus, en date du 16 octobre 1914, qui fut lu dans toutes les églises.

Dès l'arrivée de votre prédécesseur, feu le Baron von der Goltz, à Bruxelles, j'eus l'honneur de me présenter chez lui et lui demandai de vouloir ratifier pour la généralité du pays, sans limite de temps, les garanties que le Général von Huene m'avait données pour la province d'Anvers. M. le Gouverneur général retint dans ses mains ma requête, afin de l'examiner à loisir. Le lendemain, il voulut bien venir en personne à Malines m'apporter son approbation et me confirmer, en présence de deux aides de camp et de mon secrétaire particulier, la promesse que la liberté des citoyens belges serait respectée.

Douter de l'autorité de pareils engagements, c'eût été faire injure aux personnalités qui les avaient souscrits, et je m'employai donc à raffermir, par tous les moyens de persuasion en mon pouvoir, les inquiétudes persistantes des familles intéressées.

Or, voici que votre Gouvernement arrache à leurs foyers des ouvriers réduits, malgré eux, au chômage, les sépare violemment de leurs femmes et de leurs enfants et les déporte en pays ennemi. Nombreux sont les ouvriers qui ont déjà subi ce malheureux sort ; plus nombreux ceux que menacent les mêmes violences.

Au nom de la liberté de domicile et de la liberté de travail des citoyens belges ; au nom de l'inviolabilité des familles ; au nom des intérêts moraux que compromettrait gravement le régime de la déportation ; au nom de la parole donnée par le Gouverneur de la province d'Anvers et par le Gouverneur général, représentant immédiat de la plus haute autorité de l'Empire allemand, je prie respectueusement Votre Excellence de vouloir retirer les mesures de travail forcé et de déportation intimées aux ouvriers belges et de vouloir réintégrer dans leurs foyers ceux qui déjà ont été déportés.

Votre Excellence appréciera combien me serait pénible le poids de la responsabilité que j'aurais à porter vis-à-vis des familles, si la confiance qu'elles vous ont accordée par mon entremise et sur mes instances était lamentablement déçue.

Je m'obstine à croire qu'il n'en sera pas ainsi.

Agréez, Monsieur le Gouverneur général, l'assurance de ma très haute considération.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archevêque de Malines.*

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général, Bruxelles.

Translation

ARCHBISHOPRIC OF MALINES,
MALINES, *October* 19, 1916.

MR. GOVERNOR-GENERAL,—The day after the surrender of Antwerp the frightened population asked itself what would become of the Belgians of age to bear arms or who would reach that age before the end of the occupation. The entreaties of the fathers and mothers of families determined me to question the Governor of Antwerp, Baron von Huene, who had the kindness to reassure me and to authorize me to reassure in his name the agonized parents. The rumour had spread at Antwerp, nevertheless, that at Liége, Namur, and Charleroi young men had been seized and taken by force to Germany. I therefore asked Governor von Huene to be good enough to confirm to me in writing the guarantee that he had given to me orally, to the effect that nothing similar would happen in Antwerp. He answered me immediately that the rumours concerning deportations were without basis, and unhesitatingly sent me in writing, among other statements, the following:

"Young men need have no fear that they will be taken to Germany, either to be there enrolled in the army or to be employed for forced labour."

This declaration, written and signed, was publicly transmitted to the clergy and to those of the faith of the province of Antwerp, as Your Excellency can see from the document enclosed herewith, dated October 16, 1914, which was read in all the churches.

Upon the arrival of your predecessor, the late Baron von der Goltz, at Brussels, I had the honour of presenting myself at his house and asking him to be good enough to ratify for the entire country, without time limit, the guarantees which General von Huene had given to me for the province of Antwerp. The Governor-General retained this request in his possession in order to examine it at his leisure. The following day he was good enough to come in person to Malines to bring me his approval, and confirmed to me, in the presence of two aides-de-camp and of my private secretary, the promise that the liberty of Belgian citizens would be respected.

To doubt the authority of such undertakings would have been to reflect on the persons who had made them, and I took steps therefore to allay, by all the means of persuasion in my power, the anxieties that persisted in the interested families.

Notwithstanding all this your Government now tears from their homes workmen reduced, in spite of their efforts, to a state of unemployment, separates them by force from their wives and children, and deports them to enemy territory. Numerous workmen have already undergone this unhappy lot; more numerous are those who are threatened by the same acts of violence.

In the name of the liberty of domicile and of the liberty of work; in the name of the inviolability of families; in the name of the moral interests which the measures of deportation would deeply compromise; in the name of the word given by the Governor of the province of Antwerp and by the Governor-General, immediate representative of the highest authority of the German Empire, I respectfully beg Your Excellency to be kind enough to withdraw the measures of forced labour and of deportation threatened the Belgian workmen, and to be good enough to reinstate in their homes those who have already been deported.

Your Excellency will appreciate how painful would be for me the weight of the responsibility that I would have to bear as regards these families if the

confidence that they have given you through my intermediary and at my request had been lamentably deceived.

I persist in believing that it will not be thus.

Accept, Mr. Governor-General, the assurance of my very high consideration.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archbishop of Malines.*

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General, Brussels.

Annexe à la lettre précédente : Lettre du CARDINAL MERCIER *au* CLERGÉ DE LA PROVINCE D'ANVERS

ARCHÊVECHÉ DE MALINES,
MALINES, *le* 16 *octobre* 1914.

CHERS CONFRÈRES ET DÉVOUÉS COLLABORATEURS,—Le clergé de la province d'Anvers est, en partie, dispersé, et je n'ai pas de moyen sûr d'entrer en communication directe avec vous tous. Je prie donc ceux d'entre vous qui recevront ces lignes de vouloir les transmettre aux confrères avec lesquels ils sont en relation.

Il est urgent que MM. les curés et vicaires rentrent dans leur paroisse, s'ils l'ont quittée. Les voies sont libres, d'ailleurs, et la sécurité publique est partout garantie. Le retour du clergé raffermira les courages ; à mesure que les foyers se repeupleront, les honnêtes gens feront la chasse aux maraudeurs, se remettront au travail, et la vie normale reprendra sensiblement son cours.

M. le Gouverneur d'Anvers, Freiherr von Hoiningen, Général Huene, m'a autorisé à vous faire en son nom et à communiquer, par votre obligeante entremise, à nos populations, les trois déclarations suivantes :

1°. Les jeunes gens n'ont point à craindre d'être emmenés en Allemagne, soit pour y être enrôlés dans l'armée, soit pour y être employés à des travaux forcés.

2°. Si des infractions individuelles au règlement de police sont commises, l'autorité en recherchera les auteurs responsables et les punira, sans faire retomber la responsabilité sur l'ensemble de la population.

3°. Les autorités allemandes et belges ne négligeront rien pour assurer des vivres aux populations.

Même dans les paroisses où l'église et le presbytère sont dévastés, j'invite instamment le pasteur à rejoindre son troupeau, à organiser le culte dans un local provisoire, soit dans une salle de patronage, soit dans une grange ou dans une maison particulière, et à demander pour lui-même un gîte chez un de ses fidèles paroissiens.

Le premier soin du curé, après sa réintégration au milieu des siens, sera de former un Comité de Secours qu'il dirigera et qui sera composé des personnes influentes et généreuses de la paroisse.

Ce comité aura pour mission de procurer un abri, fût-il provisoire, aux familles en détresse ; de les aider à trouver des moyens immédiats de subsistance ; de les exhorter à reprendre les travaux des champs, les semailles, les métiers, de rouvrir, au plus tôt, aux enfants, les écoles et les catéchismes ; et, en général, de donner à tous le réconfort moral et la confiance religieuse dont tant d'âmes ont besoin aux heures douloureuses que nous traversons.

Les paroisses sur lesquelles le malheur s'est moins lourdement abattu ont un devoir strict de charité à remplir envers les populations les plus éprouvées. Elles aussi auront donc leur comité de secours, elles enverront leurs aumônes à l'archevêché, qui en fera la distribution selon les besoins du diocèse.

Les Pouvoirs publics interviendront, assurément, pour la reconstitution définitive des maisons détruites par la guerre, mais l'initiative privée de la charité doit pourvoir d'urgence aux frais de premier établissement et de premiers travaux de culture ; c'est à cette initiative généreuse que notre vaillant et dévoué clergé doit faire appel.

Les personnes qui ont de la fortune doivent considérer comme une obligation rigoureuse de charité de venir en aide aux malheureux et de nous mettre en mesure d'exercer auprès d'eux notre ministère.

Jusqu'à nouvel ordre, nous accordons, le vendredi et les jours de jeûne, la dispense du maigre.

Recevez, je vous prie, chers confrères et dévoués collaborateurs, les assurances de mon religieux dévouement.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archevêque de Malines.*

Translation

ARCHBISHOPRIC OF MALINES,
MALINES, *October* 16, 1914.

DEAR CONFRÈRES AND DEVOTED COLLABORATORS,—The clergy of the province of Antwerp is largely scattered and I have no direct means of communicating with all of you. I therefore request those among you who read these lines to be good enough to transmit them to their confrères with whom they are in communication.

It is urgent that the curés and the vice-curés return to their parishes if they have left them. The highways are open and public security is guaranteed everywhere. The return of the clergy will strengthen the courage of the people; as the homes are repopulated the honest people will hunt out the marauders; they will resume work, and life will soon return to its normal course.

The Governor of Antwerp, General the Baron von Huene, has authorized me to inform you in his name, and to communicate by your obliging intermediary to our population, the three following declarations:

(1) The young men need not fear being taken to Germany, either to be enrolled in the army or to be employed at forced labour.

(2) If individual infractions of police regulations are committed, the authorities will institute a search for the responsible parties and will punish them, without placing the responsibility on the entire population.

(3) The German and the Belgian authorities will spare no effort to assure the distribution of food to the population.

I earnestly request the pastor to rejoin his flock, even in the parishes where the church and presbytery have been destroyed, and to conduct the services in some improvised place, either in a hall or in a barn or in a private house, and to ask shelter for himself in the home of one of his faithful flock.

The first duty of the curé, after his return amidst his parishioners, will be to form a relief committee, which he will supervise and which will be composed of the notable persons in the parish. The mission of this committee will be to provide shelter for families in distress, even though it be only temporary; to help them to find immediate means of subsistence; to urge them to take up again their work in the fields, sowing, working at their trades, etc.; to open as soon as possible the schools for the children and to instruct them in their catechism; and, in general, to give to every one the moral comfort and religious confidence that so many souls require in the unhappy hours we are passing through.

The less unfortunate parishes have a bounden duty to perform toward the populations that have suffered more. They must also organize their relief committees and send their monetary assistance to the Archbishopric, which will distribute it according to the needs of the diocese.

The public authorities will, of course, assure the rebuilding of the houses destroyed by the war, but charitable private initiative must provide at once for the first buildings and for the first work of farming, and it is to this generous initiative that our devoted clergy must make its appeal.

Persons who are possessed of some means must consider it a rigorous obligation of charity to come to the assistance of the unfortunate and to enable us to perform our duties in our religious capacity. Until further orders abstinence from fasting will be allowed on Fridays and other fast days.

Please accept, my dear confrères and devoted collaborators, the assurances of my religious devotion.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archbishop of Malines.*

BRUXELLES, *le 26 octobre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE CARDINAL,—Dans son honorée lettre du 19 octobre, Votre Éminence m'a adressé la demande que les chômeurs belges ne soient pas transportés en Allemagne. Tout en appréciant à sa juste valeur le point de vue sur lequel Votre Éminence se place, je crois devoir vous répondre que vous n'avez pas envisagé tous les aspects du problème, plein de difficultés, du chômage en Belgique. Ce sont surtout les circonstances tout à fait anormales amenées par deux années de guerre dont Votre Éminence ne tient pas compte dans toute leur portée. Les mesures prises, dont vous désirez le retrait, ne sont que l'expression d'une nécessité impérieuse, conséquence inévitable de la guerre. Vous en trouverez plus loin l'exposé.

Votre Éminence commence par rappeller les déclarations faites par mon prédécesseur et le Gouverneur militaire d'Anvers, au mois d'octobre 1914. Ces déclarations se rapportaient à des faits liés encore directement aux opérations militaires. Elles concernaient les Belges aptes au service militaire qui, suivant les coutumes de guerre généralement admises, auraient pu être emmenés comme prisonniers civils en Allemagne. À cette époque, l'Angleterre et la France enlevèrent sur les bateaux neutres naviguant en haute mer tous les Allemands âgés de dix-sept à cinquante ans, pour les interner dans des camps de concentration. L'Allemagne n'a pas appliqué la même mesure à la Belgique. Les déclarations faites à Votre Éminence pour pouvoir rassurer la population ont été strictement suivies. En tout cas, ces déclarations étaient une preuve des bonnes intentions avec lesquelles le Gouvernement général allemand prenait en main l'administration du territoire occupé. Par suite de l'émigration clandestine en masse de jeunes gens voulant joindre l'armée belge, les autorités allemandes auraient été bien justifiées d'imiter l'exemple de l'Angleterre et de la France. Elles ne l'ont pas fait.

L'emploi des chômeurs belges en Allemagne, inauguré seulement après deux années de guerre, diffère essentiellement de la mise en captivité des hommes aptes au service militaire. La mesure n'est donc plus en rapport avec la conduite de la guerre proprement dite, mais est motivée par des causes sociales et économiques.

L'isolement économique de l'Allemagne, poursuivi par l'Angleterre sans merci et avec la dernière rigueur, s'est étendu et a pesé de plus en plus sur la Belgique. L'industrie et le commerce belges dépendant largement de l'importation de matières premières et de l'exportation d'objets fabriqués furent frappés dans leurs bases vitales. La conséquence inévitable était le manque de travail dans les masses de la population. Le système de subventions allouées aux chômeurs sur une grande échelle pouvait paraître acceptable sous condition d'une courte durée de la guerre. La longue durée comportait une exploitation abusive de ces allocations et produisait un état de choses intenable au point de vue social. Des Belges clairvoyants se sont, déjà au printemps 1915, adressés à moi, pour en démontrer les périls. Ils ont insisté sur le fait que, quiconque fournisse les moyens à présent, les allocations retomberont en fin de compte à la charge des forces vives de la Belgique. Ils ont exposé, en outre, que les allocations induisent les ouvriers à s'adonner et à s'habituer à la paresse. La suite inévitable du chômage de longue durée serait la décadence morale et physique des ouvriers. Particulièrement, les ouvriers qualifiés perdraient les aptitudes techniques de leur métier et deviendraient, au temps de paix à venir, inutilisables pour l'industrie. C'est sur ces instances et en collaboration avec le ministère belge compétent, que mes ordonnances du mois d'août 1915 contre le chômage volontaire ont été élaborées. Elles furent complétées par l'ordonnance du 15 mai 1916. Ces ordonnances ne prévoient la contrainte que dans le cas où un ouvrier refuse, sans motif valable, d'accepter un travail approprié à ses aptitudes et offert à un salaire convenable, et tombe ainsi à la charge de la charité publique. Tout refus motivé par le droit des gens est formellement reconnu valable. Par conséquent, aucun ouvrier ne peut être contraint à participer à des entreprises de guerre. Votre Éminence voudra reconnaître que ces ordonnances sont fondées sur de saines considérations de législation qui, il est vrai, mettent les intérêts généraux au-dessus de la liberté individuelle. Les plaies sociales constatées en 1915

s'étant avec le temps développées en calamité publique, il s'agit à présent d'appliquer efficacement les ordonnances en question.

Dans sa lettre, Votre Éminence invoque le haut idéal des vertus familiales. Il m'est permis de répondre que je place cet idéal, comme Votre Éminence, très haut, mais pour cette raison même, je dois dire aussi que les classes ouvrières courent le plus grand danger de perdre complètement tout idéal, si l'état actuel, qui ne peut qu'empirer, perdure. Car la paresse est le pire ennemi de la famille. Certainement, l'homme qui travaille au loin pour les siens—ce qui d'ailleurs se faisait de tous les temps, parmi les ouvriers belges—contribue mieux au bien-être de sa famille que le chômeur restant chez lui. Les ouvriers acceptant du travail en Allemagne peuvent d'ailleurs rester en relations avec leurs familles. Ils obtiennent dans des intervalles réguliers des congés pour revenir au pays. Ils peuvent emmener leur famille en Allemagne, où ils trouveront aussi des prêtres connaissant leur langue.

Dans son simple et bon sens, le peuple a, pour une bonne partie, bien compris ces verités et par dizaines de milliers des ouvriers belges sont allés de leur plein gré en Allemagne. Placés au même rang que les ouvriers allemands, ils gagnent des salaires élevés qu'ils n'ont jamais connus en Belgique. Au lieu de tomber dans la misère comme leurs camarades restés chez eux, ils se relèvent aussi bien eux-mêmes que leurs familles. D'autres, en grand nombre, aimeraient suivre cet exemple. Ils n'osent pas, parce que des influences exercées sur eux systématiquement les font hésiter. S'ils ne se libèrent pas à temps, ils doivent subir les contraintes de la loi. La responsabilité pour des rigueurs qui ne pourraient pas être evitées retomberait sur eux qui les ont empêchés de travailler.

Pour juger enfin de la situation dans l'ensemble, je prie Votre Excellence de vouloir donner son attention aux explications suivantes qui sont l'essence même du problème :

L'isolement pratiqué par l'Angleterre a contraint les territoires occupés à entrer dans une communauté d'intérêts économiques avec l'Allemagne. Presque le seul pays avec lequel la Belgique peut entretenir des échanges commerciaux, c'est l'Allemagne. Bien que ce soit contraire à l'usage entre pays ennemis, l'Allemagne n'a pas défendu d'effectuer des paiements en Belgique et, par conséquent, il y a toujours de l'argent allemand qui rentre dans le pays. Les salaires des ouvriers travaillant en Allemagne augmenteront encore le flux. D'ailleurs, l'occupation en général apporte continuellement de l'argent en Belgique et cela en l'ajoutant aux contributions de guerre qui, comme il est établi et reconnu, sont dépensées entièrement dans le pays. La communauté d'intérêts résultant des faits impose par la logique des choses, aux deux parties, la nécessité d'échanger et d'équilibrer les éléments de la vie économique. Des centaines de milliers étant sans travail en Belgique, tandis que, en Allemagne, on manque de bras, il devient un devoir, aussi bien au point de vue social qu'économique, d'employer les chômeurs belges en un travail productif en Allemagne, nécessité par la communauté d'intérêts. S'il y a des objections à faire contre cet état de choses, il faut s'adresser à l'Angleterre qui, par sa politique d'isolement, a créé cette contrainte.

Votre Éminence voudra bien voir dans ce qui précède que le problème est très complexe. J'en éprouverais une satisfaction si, après mes explications, vous vouliez l'examiner au point de vue social et économique.

Agréez, Monsieur le Cardinal, l'expression de ma très haute considération.

FRH. VON BISSING, *Generaloberst.*

À Son Éminence le Cardinal Mercier,
Archevêque de Malines, Malines.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 26, 1916.

MR. CARDINAL,—By your honoured letter of October 19 Your Eminence made the request that the Belgian unemployed be not taken to Germany. While appreciating at its just value the point of view taken by Your Eminence, I believe I must reply that you have not considered the problem in all its aspects, full of difficulties as it is. Your Eminence seems not to take into account the

abnormal circumstances created by two years of war. The measures taken, the repeal of which you desire, are but the expression of an imperative necessity, an inevitable consequence of the war. You will find below the exposé.

Your Eminence begins by recalling the declarations made by my predecessor and the Military Governor of Antwerp in the month of October 1914. These declarations referred to incidents closely related to military operations; they concerned Belgians fit for military service who, according to the customs of war generally recognized, might have been taken to Germany as civil prisoners. At that time England and France were taking off neutral steamers on the high seas all Germans between the ages of seventeen and fifty, in order to intern them in concentration camps. Germany did not apply the same measures to the Belgians. The declarations made to Your Eminence in order to reassure the population have been strictly observed. In any case these declarations were a proof of the good intentions with which the German General Government assumed the administration of the occupied territory. Owing to the clandestine emigration *en masse* of young Belgians bent upon joining the Belgian army, the German authorities would have been perfectly justified in imitating the example of England and France. This they did not do. The employment of Belgian unemployed in Germany, which has been inaugurated only after two years of war, differs essentially from the placing in captivity of men fit for military service. The measure, furthermore, is not related to the conduct of war so called, but is influenced by social and economic causes.

The economic isolation of Germany pursued by England without mercy, with the greatest rigour, has been extended and has weighed more and more upon Belgium. Belgian commerce and industry, being largely dependent on the importation of raw materials and the exportation of finished products, were attacked at their very bases. The inevitable consequence was lack of employment for the greater part of the population. The system of subsidies allotted to the unemployed upon a great scale might appear acceptable on condition that the war be of short duration. The long duration of the war entailed an abusive exploitation of these subsidies and produced a state of things untenable from the social point of view. Far-sighted Belgians called upon me in the spring of 1915 to show its perils. They insisted upon this point—that whosoever supplies the funds at present, the subsidies will finally have to be paid by Belgium. They set forth, furthermore, that the subsidies tend to induce laziness among the working men. The inevitable consequence of enforced unemployment would mean the physical and moral decadence of the workmen; especially would expert workmen lose their technical cunning and upon the signing of peace would become unfit for any work. It was upon these representations and in collaboration with the competent Belgian administration that my orders of the month of August 1915 against voluntary unemployment were elaborated. They were completed by the order of May 15, 1916. These orders did not contemplate the employment of force except in cases where workmen refused without any valid motives to accept work of a suitable nature and offered at a reasonable salary, and who thereby became a charge upon the public charity. Every refusal based upon international law is formally recognized as valid. Consequently no workman can be forced to undertake work of a military nature. Your Eminence will recognize that these orders are based upon sane considerations of legislation which properly place the general interest above that of individual liberty.

The social plagues noticed in 1915 having with time evolved into public calamity, it becomes imperative to apply at once the orders in question.

In your letter Your Eminence invokes the high ideal of familial virtues. I may be permitted to reply that, like Your Eminence, I place this ideal very high, but for that very reason I must say also that the working classes run the great risk of completely losing all ideal if the present state of affairs, which can but become worse, continues. For laziness is the family's worst enemy. Surely the man who works far away from his folk—a state of affairs which has existed always for the Belgian workman—contributes much more to the welfare of his family than by remaining at home in idleness. Workmen accepting work in Germany are permitted to remain in relation with their families. At regular

intervals they will be allowed leave to return to their country. They may take their families to Germany, where they will find priests acquainted with the languages.

In their own common sense the people have to a great extent well understood those truths, and by tens of thousands Belgian workmen have gone to Germany of their own free will. Placed on the same level with German workmen, they earn high salaries which they have never known in Belgium. Far from falling into misery, like their comrades who have remained in Belgium, they, as well as their families, have become self-supporting again. Others in large numbers would like to follow their example. They do not dare because influences are brought systematically to bear upon them. Responsibility for rigours which cannot be avoided would fall upon those who have prevented them from working.

Finally, to judge the situation as a whole, I pray Your Eminence to be so kind as to give your attention to the following explanations, which are the very essence of the problem:

The isolation imposed by England has forced the occupied territories to enter into closer economic relations with Germany. Practically the only country with which Belgium can entertain commercial relations is Germany. Although it is the custom between enemy countries, Germany has never forbidden the payment of funds into Belgium, and consequently German money is continually coming into the country. The salaries of workmen in Germany will increase that flow. Moreover, in a general way the occupation brings money into Belgium continually and adds it to the war contributions which, as it is admitted and established, are spent entirely in the country. The community of interests resulting from these facts imposes, by the logic of things, on both parties the necessity of exchanging and of stabilizing the elements of economic life. Hundreds of thousands being without work in Belgium while Germany needs labourers, it becomes a duty, both from an economic and a social point of view, to furnish the Belgian unemployed with the productive labour in Germany necessitated by this community of interests. If there are any objections to offer to such a state of affairs they must be addressed to England, who, by her policy of isolation, has created the situation.

Your Eminence will see from the above that the problem is very complex. I should feel a satisfaction if after my explanations Your Eminence would consider it from a social and an economic point of view.

FRH. VON BISSING.

To His Eminence Cardinal Mercier,
Archbishop of Malines, Malines.

Réplique du CARDINAL MERCIER *au* GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL VON BISSING

ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE MALINES,
MALINES, *le* 10 *novembre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL,—Je me retiens d'exprimer à Votre Excellence les sentiments que m'a fait éprouver sa lettre (I.10051) en réponse à celle que j'avais eu l'honneur de lui adresser, le 19 octobre, au sujet de la déportation des "chômeurs."

Je me suis rappelé mélancoliquement la parole que Votre Excellence, martelant ses syllabes, prononça devant moi, à son arrivée à Bruxelles: "J'espère que nos relations seront loyales. . . . J'ai reçu la mission de panser les plaies de la Belgique."

Ma lettre du 19 octobre rappelait à Votre Excellence l'engagement pris par le Baron von Huene, Gouverneur militaire d'Anvers, et ratifié, quelques jours plus tard, par le Baron von der Goltz, votre prédécesseur au Gouvernement général à Bruxelles. L'engagement était explicite, absolu, sans limite de durée: "Les jeunes gens n'ont point à craindre d'être emmenés en Allemagne, soit pour y être enrôlés dans l'armée, *soit pour y être employés à des travaux forcés.*"

Cet engagement est violé, tous les jours, des milliers de fois, depuis quinze jours.

Le Baron von Huene et feu le Baron von der Goltz n'ont pas dit conditionnellement, ainsi que le voudrait faire entendre votre dépêche du 26 octobre: "Si l'occupation ne dure pas plus de deux ans, les hommes aptes au service militaire ne seront pas mis en captivité." Ils ont dit catégoriquement: "Les jeunes gens, et à plus forte raison les hommes arrivés à l'âge mûr, ne seront, *à aucun moment de la durée de l'occupation, ni emprisonnés ni employés à des travaux forcés.*"

Pour se justifier, Votre Excellence invoque "la conduite de l'Angleterre et de la France qui ont, dit-elle, enlevé sur les bateaux neutres tous les Allemands de dix-sept à cinquante ans, pour les interner dans des camps de concentration."

Si l'Angleterre et la France avaient commis une injustice, c'est sur les Anglais et sur les Français qu'il faudrait vous venger et non sur un peuple inoffensif et désarmé.

Mais y a-t-il eu injustice? Nous sommes mal informés de ce qui se passe au delà des murs de notre prison, mais je suis fort tenté de croire que les Allemands saisis et internés appartenaient à la réserve de l'armée impériale; ils étaient donc des militaires que l'Angleterre et la France avaient le droit d'envoyer dans des camps de concentration. La Belgique, elle, n'avait inauguré chez elle, que depuis le mois d'août 1913, le service personnel général.

Les Belges, de dix-sept à cinquante ans, résidant en Belgique occupée sont donc des civils, des non-combattants. C'est jouer sur les mots que de les assimiler aux réservistes allemands, en leur appliquant l'appellation équivoque: "hommes aptes au service militaire."

Les arrêtés, les affiches, les commentaires de la presse, qui devaient préparer l'opinion publique aux mesures mises, en ce moment, à exécution, invoquaient surtout deux considérations. Les chômeurs, affirmait-on, sont un danger pour la sécurité publique; ils sont une charge pour la bienfaisance officielle.

Il n'est pas vrai, disait déjà ma lettre du 19 octobre, que nos ouvriers aient troublé, ou simplement menacé, nulle part, l'ordre extérieur. Cinq millions de Belges, des centaines d'Américains sont les témoins émerveillés de la dignité et de la patience impeccable de notre classe ouvrière.

Il n'est pas vrai que les ouvriers privés de travail soient à la charge ni du pouvoir occupant ni de la bienfaisance à laquelle préside son administration. Le Comité national, auquel l'occupant n'a aucune part active, est le seul pourvoyeur de la subsistance des victimes du chômage forcé.

Ces deux réponses sont restées sans réplique.

La lettre du 26 octobre essaie d'un autre procédé de justification: elle allègue que la mesure qui frappe les chômeurs est motivée par des causes sociales "et économiques."

C'est parce qu'il a à cœur, plus chaudement et plus intelligemment que nous, l'intérêt de la nation belge, que le Gouvernement allemand sauve l'ouvrier de la paresse, l'empêche de perdre ses aptitudes techniques. Le travail forcé est la contre-valeur des avantages économiques que nous procurent nos échanges commerciaux avec l'Empire.

Au surplus, si le Belge a à se plaindre de cet état de choses, qu'il adresse ses griefs à l'Angleterre: elle est la grande coupable; "c'est elle qui, par sa politique d'isolement, a créé cette contrainte."

A cette plaidoirie qui est, dans l'original, embarrassée, compliquée, il suffira d'opposer quelques déclarations franches et brèves:

Chaque ouvrier belge libèrera un ouvrier allemand, qui fera un soldat de plus pour l'armée allemande. Voilà, dans toute sa simplicité, le fait qui domine la situation. L'auteur de la lettre sent lui-même ce fait brûlant, car il écrit: "La mesure n'est pas non plus en rapport avec la conduite de la guerre *proprement dite.*" Elle est donc en rapport avec la guerre "improprement dite"; qu'est-ce à dire, sinon que l'ouvrier belge ne prend pas les armes, mais dégage les mains de l'ouvrier allemand qui les prendra? L'ouvrier belge est contraint de coopérer, d'une façon indirecte mais évidente, à la guerre contre son pays. Ceci est en contradiction manifeste avec l'esprit de la Convention de La Haye.

Autre déclaration : le chômage n'est le fait ni de l'ouvrier belge ni de l'Angleterre, il est l'effet du régime d'occupation allemande.

L'occupant s'est emparé d'approvisionnements considérables de matières premières destinées à notre industrie nationale ; il a saisi et expédié en Allemagne les machines, les outils, les métaux de nos usines et de nos ateliers. La possibilité du travail national ainsi supprimée, il restait à l'ouvrier une alternative : travailler pour l'Empire allemand, soit ici, soit en Allemagne, ou chômer. Quelques dizaines de milliers d'ouvriers, sous la pression de la peur ou de la faim, acceptèrent, à regret pour la plupart, du travail à l'étranger ; mais quatre cent mille ouvriers ou ouvrières préférèrent se résigner au chômage, avec ses privations, que de desservir les intérêts de la patrie ; ils vivaient dans la pauvreté, à l'aide du maigre secours que leur allouait *le Comité national de secours et d'alimentation* contrôlé par les ministres protecteurs d'Espagne, d'Amérique, de Hollande. Calmes, dignes, ils supportaient sans murmure leur sort pénible. Nulle part, il n'y eut ni révolte ni apparence de révolte. Patrons et ouvriers attendaient avec endurance la fin de notre longue épreuve.

Cependant, les administrations communales et l'initiative privée essayaient d'atténuer les inconvénients indéniables du chômage. Mais le pouvoir occupant paralysa leurs efforts. Le Comité national tenta d'organiser un enseignement professionnel à l'usage des chômeurs. Cet enseignement pratique, respectueux de la dignité de nos travailleurs, devait leur entretenir la main, affiner leurs capacités de travail, préparer le relèvement du pays. Qui s'opposa à cette noble initiative, dont nos grands industriels avaient élaboré le plan ? Qui ? le pouvoir occupant.

Cependant les communes s'évertuèrent à faire exécuter par leurs chômeurs des travaux d'utilité publique. Le Gouverneur général subordonna ces entreprises à une autorisation qu'en règle générale il refusait. Les cas ne sont pas rares, m'assure-t-on, où le Gouvernement général autorisa des travaux de ce genre à la condition expresse qu'ils ne fussent point confiés à des chômeurs.

On voulait donc le chômage. On recrutait l'armée des chômeurs.

Et l'on ose après cela lancer à nos ouvriers l'injure : paresseux !

Non, l'ouvrier belge n'est pas un paresseux. Il a le culte du travail. Dans les nobles luttes de la vie économique il a fait ses preuves. Quand il a dédaigné le travail à gros salaire que lui offrait l'occupant, c'est par dignité patriotique. Nous, pasteur de notre peuple, qui suivons de plus près que jamais ses douleurs et ses angoisses, nous savons ce qu'il lui en a coûté parfois de préférer l'indépendance dans la privation au bien-être dans la sujétion. Ne lui jetez pas la pierre. Il a droit à votre respect.

La lettre du 29 octobre dit que la première responsable du chômage de nos ouvriers, c'est l'Angleterre, parce qu'elle ne laisse pas entrer les matières premières en Belgique.

L'Angleterre laisse entrer généreusement en Belgique les moyens de ravitaillement, sous le contrôle des États neutres, de l'Espagne, des États-Unis, de la Hollande. Elle laisserait pénétrer assurément, sous le même contrôle, les matières nécessaires à l'industrie, si l'Allemagne voulait s'engager à nous les laisser et à ne point mettre la main sur les produits fabriqués de notre travail industriel.

Mais l'Allemagne, par divers procédés, notamment par l'organisation de ses " Centrales " sur lesquelles ni les Belges ni nos ministres protecteurs ne peuvent exercer aucun contrôle efficace, absorbe une part considérable des produits de l'agriculture et de l'industrie du pays. Il en résulte un renchérissement inquiétant de la vie, cause de privations pénibles pour ceux qui n'ont pas ou qui n'ont plus d'économies. La " communauté d'intérêts," dont la lettre vante pour nous l'avantage, n'est pas l'équilibre normal des échanges commerciaux, mais la prédominance du fort sur le faible.

Cet état d'infériorité économique auquel nous sommes réduits, ne nous le représentez donc pas, je vous prie, comme un privilège qui justifierait le travail forcé au profit de notre ennemi et la déportation de légions d'innocents en terre d'exil !

L'esclavage, et la peine la plus forte du Code pénal après la peine de mort,

la déportation ! La Belgique, qui ne vous fit jamais aucun mal, avait-elle mérité de vous ce traitement qui crie vengeance au ciel ?

Monsieur le Gouverneur général, en commençant ma lettre, je rappelais la noble parole de Votre Excellence : " Je suis venu en Belgique, avec la mission de panser les plaies de votre pays."

Si Votre Excellence pouvait, comme nos prêtres, pénétrer dans les foyers ouvriers, entendre les lamentations des épouses et des mères que ses ordonnances jettent dans le deuil et dans l'épouvante, elle se rendrait mieux compte que la plaie du peuple belge est béante.

Il y a deux ans, entend-on répéter, c'était la mort, le pillage, l'incendie, mais c'était la guerre ! Aujourd'hui, ce n'est plus la guerre ; c'est le calcul froid, l'écrasement voulu, l'emprise de la force sur le droit, l'abaissement de la personnalité humaine, un défi à l'humanité.

Il dépend de vous, Excellence, de faire taire ces cris de la conscience révoltée. Puisse le bon Dieu, que nous invoquons de toute l'ardeur de notre âme pour notre peuple opprimé, vous inspirer la pitié du bon Samaritain !

Agréez, Monsieur le Gouverneur général, l'hommage de ma très haute considération.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archevêque de Malines.*

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général, Bruxelles.

Translation

ARCHBISHOPRIC OF MALINES,
MALINES, *November* 10, 1916.

MR. GOVERNOR-GENERAL,—I refrain from expressing to Your Excellency the sentiments that your letter, in reply to the letter which I had the honour to address to you on October 19, relative to the deportation of the unemployed, have inspired in me.

I have recalled with melancholy the words which Your Excellency, stressing each syllable, pronounced in my presence after your arrival at Brussels : " I hope that our relations will be loyal. . . . I have received the mission of dressing the wounds of Belgium."

My letter of October 19 recalled to Your Excellency the engagement undertaken by Baron von Huene, Military Governor of Antwerp, and ratified a few days later by Baron von der Goltz, your predecessor as Governor-General at Brussels. The engagement was explicit, absolute, unlimited as to time : " The young men need not fear being taken to Germany, neither to be enrolled in the army *or to be employed at forced labour.*"

This engagement has been violated every day, thousands of times in the last fortnight.

Baron von Huene and Baron von der Goltz did not say conditionally, as your communication of October 26 would like to imply : " If the occupation does not last longer than two years, men fit for military duty will not be taken into captivity " ; they said, categorically : " Young men, and with greater reason *men who have reached an advanced age, will not be at any moment of the occupation either made prisoners or employed at forced labour.*" To justify yourself, Your Excellency invokes the conduct of England and of France, who, you say, " took off neutral steamers all Germans between the ages of seventeen and fifty in order to intern them in concentration camps."

If England and France have committed an injustice it is upon the English and the French that you should avenge yourself, and not upon an inoffensive and disarmed people. But has an injustice been done ? We are poorly informed as to what goes on outside the walls of our prison, but I am strongly inclined to believe that the Germans who were seized and interned belonged to the reserve of the imperial army ; they were therefore soldiers, and England and France had the right to send them to concentration camps. Belgium had inaugurated only since the month of August 1913 the system of compulsory service for all.

Belgians between the ages of seventeen and fifty residing in the occupied

portion of Belgium are therefore civilians—that is to say, non-combatants. It is to juggle words to assimilate them with the German reservists in applying to them the equivocal appellation "men fit for military service."

The decrees, *affiches*, comments of the Press, which were intended to prepare public opinion for the measures to be taken, invoked chiefly two considerations: the unemployed, so they declared, are a danger to public security; they are a charge upon the public charity.

It is not true, as I said in my letter of October 19, that our workmen have troubled or even threatened public order anywhere. Five million Belgians, hundreds of Americans, are the astonished witnesses of the remarkable dignity and patience of our working class. It is not true that workmen deprived of labour are a charge upon the occupying Power for the charity which is dispensed by their administration. The Comité National, in which the occupying Government plays no active part, is the sole provider of subsistence to the victims of enforced idleness.

These two replies remain unanswered.

The letter of October 26 attempts another process of justification; it alleges that the measure affecting the unemployed is influenced by "social and economic" causes.

It is because the German Government has taken to heart more warmly and more intelligently than we the interest of the Belgian nation that it is saving the workman from idleness and preventing him from losing his technical fitness. Forced labour is the equivalent of the economic advantages that we obtain from our commercial exchange with the Empire.

Furthermore, if the Belgians complain of this state of things let them address their grievances to England; she is the great guilty one; "it is she who has brought about this situation by her policy of isolation."

To this argument, which in the original is confused, complicated, it will suffice to oppose a few frank and brief statements:

Each Belgian workman will liberate a German workman, who will add one more soldier to the German army. There, in all its simplicity, is the fact that dominates the situation. The author of the letter seems himself to feel this burning fact, for he writes, "nor does the measure affect the conduct of war properly so called." It is therefore connected with war "improperly so called" (*improprement dite*); what does this mean, if not that if the Belgian workman does not bear arms he will free the hands of a German workman who will take up arms? The Belgian workman is forced to co-operate in an indirect but undeniable manner in the war against his country. This is manifestly contrary to the spirit of The Hague Conventions.

Another statement is this: unemployment is caused neither by the Belgian workmen nor by England; it is brought about by the regime of German occupation.

The occupying Power has seized great quantities of raw materials intended for our national industry; it has seized from our factories and workshops machinery, tools, and metals, and shipped them to Germany. The possibility of national employment being thus suppressed, there remained one of two alternatives to the workman—to work for the German Empire here or in Germany, or to remain idle. A few thousand workmen, under the influence of fright or hunger, agreed, the greater part with regret, to work for the enemy; but four hundred thousand workmen and workwomen preferred to resign themselves to unemployment, with its privations, rather than to betray the interests of the native land; they lived in poverty, with the aid of a meagre relief allowed them by the Comité National de Secours, under the supervision of the Ministers of the United States, Holland, and Spain. Calm, dignified, they bore without a murmur their painful lot. In no section of the country was there a revolt, or even the semblance of one. Employers and employés awaited with patience the end of our long martyrdom. The communal administrations, however, and private initiative endeavoured to alleviate the undoubted inconveniences of unemployment; but the occupying force paralysed their efforts. The C.N. attempted to organize a professional school for the benefit of the unemployed.

This practical instruction, respectful of the dignity of our workmen, was intended to preserve their skill and to increase their capacity for work, in order to prepare for the revival of the country. Who opposed this noble movement, the scheme of which had been devised by our large manufacturers? Who? The occupying Government.

Nevertheless the communes made every effort to give work to the unemployed by undertaking public improvements; the Governor-General limited these enterprises to a permission, which as a general rule he refused to grant. There are, I understand, numerous cases where the General Government authorized work of this kind upon the express condition that it be not undertaken by the unemployed.

They were seeking to create employment. They were recruiting the army of the unemployed.

And they dare, after this, to insult our workmen by calling them lazy.

No, the Belgian workman is not lazy; he has a taste for work. In the noble struggles of economic life he has proved his fitness. When he refused to work at a high wage offered him by the occupying Government, it was on account of his dignified patriotism. We, the pastors of our people, who are sharing more and more closely their sufferings and anguish, we know what it has cost them sometimes to choose independence, with its privations, instead of well-being in a state of subjection. Do not throw stones at them; they are entitled to your respect.

The letter of October 26 says that the party primarily responsible for the unemployment of our workmen is England, because she has not allowed raw material to enter Belgium.

England has generously allowed food-stuffs to enter Belgium for the *ravitaillement*, under the control of neutral nations such as the United States, Holland, and Spain. She would also allow, under the same control, raw materials for industry to enter the country if Germany were to agree to leave them to us and not to seize the finished products of our industrial labours.

But Germany, by divers processes, notably by the organization of its "Zentralen," over which neither the Belgians nor their protecting Ministers can exercise any efficacious control, absorbs a large portion of the agricultural and industrial products of our country. The result is an alarming increase in the cost of living, which causes painful privations for those who have no longer any savings. The community of interests, of which the letter speaks so highly, is not the normal equilibrium of commercial exchange, but the predominance of the strong over the weak. Do not represent, I beseech you, this state of economic inferiority to which we are reduced as a privilege that should justify hard labour to the advantage of our enemy and the deportation of legions of innocent people to the land of exile!

Slavery, and the heaviest penalty of the penal code after that of death—that is deportation! Has Belgium, who never did you any wrong, deserved this treatment from you which calls down vengeance from heaven?

Mr. Governor-General, in the beginning of my latter I recalled the noble phrase of Your Excellency: "I have received the mission of dressing the wounds of Belgium."

If Your Excellency could penetrate into the homes of working men as our priests do, and hear the lamentations of wives and mothers whom your order has cast into mourning and into dismay, you would realize far better that the wound of the Belgian people is wide open.

Two years ago, we hear people say, it was death, pillage, fire, but it was war! To-day it is no longer war; it is the cold, calculating spirit, the desire to annihilate, the victory of force over right, the lowering of the human personality, the cry of defiance to humanity.

It rests with Your Excellency to quiet these cries of a revolted conscience; may the good Lord, upon whom we call with our whole soul for our oppressed people, inspire you with the pity of a Good Samaritan!

Accept, Mr. Governor-General, the homage of my consideration.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archbishop of Malines.*

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General, Brussels.

LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL DE BELGIQUE,
P.A. I.11254.

BRUXELLES, *le* 23 *novembre* 1916.

TRÈS VÉNÉRÉ MONSIEUR LE CARDINAL,—J'ai l'honneur de faire savoir à Votre Éminence que j'ai bien reçu l'honorée lettre du 10 de ce mois ainsi que la lettre autographe du 15 de ce mois, concernant le retard dans l'envoi. J'ai à répondre ce qui suit :

Le 19 octobre de cette année, Votre Éminence m'a adressé une requête en vue d'obtenir que l'on cesse d'employer les chômeurs belges en Allemagne. Dans ma réponse du 28 octobre de cette année, tout en appréciant à sa juste valeur le point de vue auquel vous vous placez, j'ai exposé les raisons et les considérations qui ont engagé le pouvoir occupant à prendre les mesures concernant la question des ouvriers. Ces mesures n'étaient pas la conséquence de l'arbitraire ou d'une étude insuffisante du problème difficile, mais le résultat d'un mûr examen des circonstances qu'il convient de considérer et de la nécessité qu'il faut reconnaître inévitable. Dans l'ensemble, je me vois donc obligé de renvoyer à nouveau Votre Éminence à mes déclarations du 28 octobre. Ce que vous répondez à ces considérations, ou repose sur une explication erronée de mes déclarations, ou résulte de conceptions que je ne puis approuver quant à leur essence. Car le chômage qui a pris une extension considérable en Belgique est une grande plaie sociale, tandis qu'il est un bienfait social pour les ouvriers belges de les mettre au travail en Allemagne. Il est vrai que, à mon arrivée en Belgique, j'ai dit à Votre Éminence que je voulais panser les plaies que la guerre avait causées au peuple belge ; mais les mesures prises ne sont pas en contradiction avec ces paroles. Je dois dire également que Votre Éminence méconnaît les faits, quand elle veut écarter mes efforts, souvent couronnés de succès, pour rétablir la vie économique en Belgique, par la remarque que l'on a créé au contraire un chômage artificiel. L'Angleterre a mis des conditions inacceptables à l'importation en Belgique des matières premières et à l'exportation des produits fabriqués. Ces questions ont été, au cours de la guerre, le sujet de négociations sérieuses avec des personnes compétentes tant de nationalité belge que de pays neutres ; mais il nous mènerait trop loin de les exposer ici. Je répète seulement que les situations lamentables sont, en dernière analyse, une suite de la politique d'isolement de l'Angleterre, comme auparavant les réquisitions des matières premières furent une conséquence inévitable de cette même politique. Je dois aussi maintenir absolument que, au point de vue économique, le pouvoir occupant garantit au pays tous les avantages qui, vu la contrainte créée par l'Angleterre, peuvent lui être assurés.

L'exécution des mesures prises au sujet des chômeurs a causé à mon Administration quantité de difficultés, qui occasionnent également des désagréments à la population. Tout cela eût pu être évité, si les administrations communales avaient permis, par une intervention appropriée, de rendre l'exécution plus simple et mieux adaptée à la fin proposée. Dans les circonstances actuelles, on a dû étendre les mesures à un cercle plus grand, de façon à y englober d'abord un nombre plus considérable de personnes. Mais des précautions ont été prises pour restreindre autant que possible les erreurs. Des catégories déterminées de professions sont exclues de l'obligation de se présenter et des plaintes individuelles sont ou bien examinées immédiatement, ou bien remises pour un examen ultérieur.

Des considérations qui précèdent, Votre Éminence voudra bien conclure qu'il est impossible de faire suite à sa demande de retirer les mesures prises ; que néanmoins, dans l'application de ces mesures, on a fait, malgré les difficultés qui se sont présentées, tout ce qu'il était possible de faire dans l'intérêt commun.

Veuillez agréer, Éminence, l'expression de ma très haute considération.

FHR. VON BISSING, *Generaloberst.*

À Son Éminence Monsieur le Cardinal Mercier,
Archevêque de Malines, Malines.

Translation

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF BELGIUM,
P.A. I.11254.

BRUSSELS, *November* 23, 1916.

VERY VENERABLE CARDINAL,—I have the honour to inform Your Eminence that I have duly received the honoured letter of the 10th of this month, as well as the autograph letter of the 15th of this month concerning the delay in sending it. I reply as follows:

On October 19 of this year Your Eminence addressed to me a request with a view of inducing us to cease to employ the Belgians unemployed in Germany. In my response of October 28 of this year, while appreciating at its true value the point of view at which you place yourself, I have exposed the considerations and the reasons that have moved the occupying Power to take measures concerning the question of workmen. The measures were not the consequence of an arbitrary will or of an insufficient study of a difficult problem, but the result of a ripe examination of the circumstances which it is proper to consider and of the necessity that we must recognize as inevitable. Under the circumstances I find myself obliged again to invite the attention of Your Eminence to my declaration of October 28. Your response to these considerations either reposes on a misunderstanding of my declarations or is the result of conceptions which, in their essence, I cannot approve. The unemployment has taken a wide extension in Belgium and is a great social sore, so much so that it is to the social benefit of the Belgian working men to put them to work in Germany. It is true that on my arrival in Belgium I told Your Eminence that I wished to dress the wounds the war had done to the Belgian people; but the measures taken are not in contradiction with this declaration. I should say also that Your Eminence recognizes the facts when he tries to put aside my efforts, often crowned with success, to re-establish economic life in Belgium, by the remark that we have created on the contrary an artificial unemployment. England has imposed unacceptable conditions on the importation of raw materials and exportation of manufactured produce. These questions have been, during the war, the subject of serious negotiations with competent persons, not only of Belgian nationality, but of neutral countries. But we would be led too far if I were to expose them here. I only repeat that the lamentable situation is in the last analysis a result of the English policy of isolation, as formerly the requisitions of raw materials were the unavoidable consequence of the same policy. I must absolutely maintain that from the economic point of view the occupying Power guarantees to the country all the advantages which, in view of the constraint created by England, can be assured to it.

The execution of the measures taken with reference to the unemployed has caused my administration many difficulties, which occasion also difficulties for the population. All this could have been avoided if the communal administrations had permitted us, by an appropriate intervention, to render the execution of these measures more simple and better adapted to the end proposed. Under the present circumstances we have had to extend the measures to a larger circle, in order in the first place to take in a larger number of persons. But precautions have been taken to avoid errors as much as possible. Those in certain professional categories are exempt from the obligation to present themselves, and individual complaints either are immediately examined or postponed for future examination.

From the foregoing considerations, Your Eminence will be good enough to conclude that it is impossible to respond to your request to withdraw the measures that have already been taken. However, in the application of these we have done all that it is possible to do in the common interest.

Pray accept, Eminence, the expression of my very high consideration.

BARON VON BISSING, *Colonel-General.*

To His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, Malines.

ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE MALINES, MALINES, *le 29 novembre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL,—La lettre (I.11254) que Votre Excellence me fait l'honneur de m'écrire, sous la date du 23 novembre, est pour moi une déception. En plusieurs milieux, que j'avais lieu de croire exactement renseignés, il se disait que Votre Excellence s'était fait un devoir de protester devant les plus hautes autorités de l'Empire, contre les mesures qu'elle est contrainte d'appliquer à la Belgique. J'escomptais donc, pour le moins, un délai dans l'application de ces mesures, en attendant qu'elles fussent soumises à un examen nouveau, et un adoucissement aux procédés qui les mettent à exécution.

Or, voici que, sans répondre un mot à aucun des arguments par lesquels j'établissais, dans mes lettres du 19 octobre et du 10 novembre, le caractère antijuridique et antisocial de la condamnation de la classe ouvrière belge aux travaux forcés et à la déportation, Votre Excellence se borne à reprendre, dans sa dépêche du 23 novembre, le texte même de sa lettre du 26 octobre. Ses deux lettres du 23 novembre et du 26 octobre sont, en effet, identiques dans le fond et presque dans la forme.

D'autre part, le recrutement des prétendus chômeurs se fait, la plupart du temps, sans aucun égard aux observations des autorités locales. Plusieurs rapports que j'ai en mains attestent que le clergé est brutalement écarté, les bourgmestres et conseillers communaux réduits au silence ; les recruteurs se trouvent donc en face d'inconnus parmi lesquels ils font arbitrairement leur choix.

Les exemples de ce que j'avance abondent ; en voici deux très récents parmi une quantité d'autres que je tiens à la disposition de Votre Excellence. Le 21 novembre, le recrutement se fit dans la commune de Kersbeek-Misoom. Sur les 1323 habitants que compte la commune, les recruteurs en enlevèrent 94, en bloc, sans distinction de condition sociale ou de profession, fils de fermiers soutiens de parents âgés et infirmes, pères de famille laissant femme et enfants dans la misère, tous nécessaires à leur famille comme le pain de chaque jour. Deux familles se voient ravir chacune quatre fils à la fois. Sur les 94 déportés, il y avait deux chômeurs.

Dans la région d'Aerschot, le recrutement se fit le 23 novembre : à Rillaer, à Gelrode, à Rotselaer, des jeunes gens soutiens d'une mère veuve ; des fermiers à la tête d'une nombreuse famille, l'un d'entre eux, qui a passé les cinquante ans, a dix enfants, cultivant des terres, possédant plusieurs bêtes à cornes, n'ayant jamais touché un sou de la charité publique, furent emmenés, de force, en dépit de toutes les protestations. Dans la petite commune de Rillaer on a pris jusque vingt-cinq jeunes garçons de dix-sept ans.

Votre Excellence eût voulu que les administrations communales se fissent les complices de ces recrutements odieux. De par leur situation légale et en conscience, elles ne le pouvaient pas. Mais elles pouvaient éclairer les recruteurs et ont qualité pour cela. Les prêtres, qui connaissent mieux que personne le petit peuple, seraient pour les recruteurs des auxiliaires précieux. Pourquoi refuse-t-on leur concours ?

À la fin de sa lettre, Votre Excellence rappelle que les hommes appartenant aux professions libérales ne sont pas inquiétés. Si l'on n'emmenait que des chômeurs, je comprendrais cette exception. Mais si l'on continue d'enrôler indistinctement les hommes valides, l'exception est injustifiée.

Il serait inique de faire peser sur la classe ouvrière seule la déportation. La classe bourgeoise doit avoir sa part dans le sacrifice, si cruel soit-il et tout juste parce qu'il est cruel, que l'occupant impose à la nation. Nombreux sont les membres de mon clergé qui m'ont prié de réclamer pour eux une place à l'avant-garde des persécutés. J'enregistre leur offre et vous la soumets avec fierté.

Je veux croire encore que les autorités de l'Empire n'ont pas dit leur dernier mot. Elles penseront à nos douleurs imméritées, à la réprobation du monde civilisé, au jugement de l'histoire et au châtiment de Dieu.

Agréez, Excellence, l'hommage de ma très haute considération.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archevêque de Malines.*

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général, Bruxelles.

Translation

ARCHBISHOPRIC OF MALINES, MALINES, *November* 29, 1916.

MR. GOVERNOR-GENERAL,—The letter (I.11254) that Your Excellency does me the honour to write under date of November 23 is a disappointment to me. In many circles that I had reasons to believe well informed, I was told that Your Excellency had felt it a duty to protest before the highest authorities of the Empire against the measures that you are obliged to apply in Belgium. I reckoned then at least on a delay in the application of these measures, until there could be a new examination or an amelioration of the processes which put them in execution.

But now, without a word of reply to any one of the arguments by which, in my letters of October 19 and November 10, I establish the anti-judicial and anti-social character of the condemnation of the Belgian working classes to forced labour and to deportation, you confine yourself to repeating, in your dispatch of November 23, the very text of Your Excellency's letter of October 26. Your two letters of November 23 and October 26 are in effect identical in matter and almost in form.

Besides, the recruiting of pretended unemployed is made, the greater part of the time, without any observation of the local authorities. Several reports that I have in hand attest that the clergy is brutally put aside, the burgomasters and common councillors are ordered to keep silent; the recruiting officers find themselves then faced by unknown people, among whom they arbitrarily make their choice.

There are abundant examples of this; here are two very recent ones among quantities of others that I hold at the disposal of Your Excellency. On November 21 recruiting was going on in the commune of Kersbeek-Misoom. Out of the 1323 inhabitants of the commune the recruiting officers took away ninety-four in a mass, without discussion as to the social conditions or professions—sons of farmers, the supporters of aged and infirm parents, fathers of families leaving wife and children in poverty, all as necessary to their families as daily bread. Two families had torn from them each four sons at a time. Out of the ninety-four deported there were two unemployed.

In the region of Aerschot the recruiting was made on November 23. At Rillaer, at Gelrode, at Rotselaer, young men, the supporters of a widowed mother, fathers at the head of large families—one among them who had already passed fifty years, has ten children, cultivating the ground, possessing several horned beasts, having never touched a sou of public charity—were carried away by force, despite their protestations. In the little commune of Rillaer they took as many as twenty-five young boys of seventeen years.

Your Excellency would have wished the communal administrations to be the accomplices of these odious seizures; by their legal situation and in all conscience they could not do it, but they could have enlightened the recruiting officers and were able to do this. The priests, who knew the common people better than everybody, would have been very able aids for the recruiting officers. Why do they refuse their help?

At the end of your letter Your Excellency recalls that the men belonging to the liberal professions are not troubled. If they took away only the unemployed I should understand the decision; but if they continue to enrol without distinction able men, the exception is not justified. It would be iniquitous to allow the deportation to weigh solely on the working classes. The middle class should have its part in the sacrifice, however cruel it may be—and precisely because it is cruel—which the occupant imposes on the nation. The members of my clergy who have prayed me to ask for them a place in the vanguard of the persecuted are numerous. I register their offer and submit it to you with pride.

I should like to believe that the authorities of the Empire have not said their last word. They will think of our unmerited sufferings, of the reprobation of the civilized world, the judgment of history, and the punishment of God.

Accept, Excellency, the homage of my very high consideration.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER, *Archbishop of Malines.*

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing, Governor-General, Brussels.

NOTE 2 (see p. 271).

Protestation des Syndicats socialistes et indépendants. Lettre au GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL VON BISSING

BRUXELLES, *le* 30 *octobre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Les mesures que votre Administration prépare pour forcer les chômeurs à travailler au profit du pays de l'envahisseur, la déportation déjà commencée de nos camarades de la région des étapes, soulèvent une profonde émotion parmi toute la classe ouvrière de Belgique.

Les secrétaires et les représentants des grands syndicats socialistes et indépendants estiment qu'ils manqueraient à leur devoir s'ils ne portaient pas à votre connaissance les sentiments douloureux qui agitent les ouvriers et l'écho de leur plainte émue.

Ils ont vu enlever les machines de leurs usines, réquisitionner les matières premières les plus diverses, s'amonceler les obstacles pour la reprise d'un travail régulier, disparaître les unes après les autres les libertés publiques dont ils étaient fiers.

Depuis plus de deux années la classe ouvrière, plus que toute autre, gravit le plus pénible calvaire, souffrant la misère et parfois la faim, alors que là-bas, au loin, ses fils combattent et meurent sans qu'elle puisse leur crier la reconnaissance dont ses cœurs débordent.

Elle a subi tout dans le calme le plus parfait et avec la dignité la plus imposante, réprimant toutes ses souffrances, ses plaintes, ses douleurs pénibles, sacrifiant tout à son idéal de liberté et d'indépendance. Mais voilà que les mesures annoncées vont lui faire ressentir la plus grande douleur humaine : des prolétaires, pauvres, parce qu'ils chôment contre leur gré, des citoyens d'un État libre vont être condamnés en masse au travail forcé, sans avoir enfreint aucun arrêté ni aucun règlement.

Au nom des familles d'ouvriers où règne à l'heure présente la plus grande inquiétude et où seront encore versées tant de larmes de mères, de fiancées et de petits enfants, nous venons demander à Votre Excellence de vouloir empêcher l'accomplissement de ces actes vexatoires, contraires au droit des gens, contraires à tout ce qui constitue la dignité et la grandeur de la personnalité humaine.

En vous priant de vouloir excuser notre émotion, nous vous offrons, Excellence, l'assurance de nos salutations respectueuses:

[Suivent les signatures des membres du Comité national et de la Commission syndicale de la Belgique.

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *October* 30, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—The measures under consideration by your administration to force the unemployed to work for an invading Power, the deportation of our unhappy comrades which has begun in the region of the Étapes, have most profoundly moved the entire working class in Belgium.

The undersigned members of the large socialist and independent syndicates of Belgium would consider that they had not fulfilled their duty if they did not express to you the painful sentiments which agitate the labourers and convey to you the echo of their touching complaints.

They have seen the machinery taken from their factories, the most diverse kinds of raw materials being requisitioned, the accumulation of obstacles to prevent the resumption of regular work, the disappearance, one by one, of every public liberty of which they were so proud.

For more than two years the labouring class, more than any other, has been forced to undergo the most bitter trials, experiencing misery and often hunger; while their children far away fight and die the parents can never convey to them the affection with which their hearts are overflowing.

Our labouring class has endured everything with the utmost calm and with the most impressive dignity, ignoring its sufferings and heavy trials, sacrificing everything to its ideal of liberty and independence. But now the measures

which have been announced will make the population drink the last dregs of the cup of human sorrow; the proletariat, the poor upon whom unemployment has been forced, citizens of a modern State, are to be condemned to forced labour without having violated any regulation or order.

In the name of the families of workmen among which the most painful anxiety reigns at present, whose mothers, whose fiancées, and whose little children are destined to shed so many more tears, we beg Your Excellency to prevent the carrying out of this painful enterprise, contrary to international law, contrary to the dignity of the working classes, contrary to everything that makes for worth and greatness in human nature.

We beg you to pardon our emotion and we offer Your Excellency the homage of our distinguished consideration.

[Here follow the signatures of the members of the National Committee and of the Commission Syndicale de la Belgique.]

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

Réponse du GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL VON BISSING

BRUXELLES, *le* 3 *novembre* 1916.

À LA COMMISSION SYNDICALE, BRUXELLES.

En réponse à votre lettre du 30 octobre 1916, par laquelle vous me priiez de renoncer au transport des chômeurs en Allemagne, je vous fais part qu'il ne peut être donné suite à votre demande.

Depuis le début de la guerre une grande partie des ouvriers belges ont abandonné le travail. La raison en est, d'une part, l'arrêt de nombreuses entreprises industrielles, par suite du manque de matières premières occasionné par l'isolement créé par l'ennemi, d'autre part, le refus de travail.

La longue durée de cette situation commence à entraîner des conséquences fâcheuses et, comme administrateur du territoire occupé, j'ai pour devoir, conformément au principe du droit des gens, de prendre les mesures adéquates.

Des Belges clairvoyants, déjà au printemps 1915, sont venus vers moi et ont attiré mon attention sur les dangers du chômage et du dégoût du travail. Ils ont démontré que les secours, de quelque côté qu'ils viennent, constituent en fin de compte une charge pour l'économie politique belge et qu'ils entraînent également les ouvriers à l'oisiveté. Il en résulte que les ouvriers s'amoindrissent physiquement et moralement, qu'en particulier les ouvriers instruits perdent leurs talents et leur savoir-faire et qu'ils seront aussi devenus inutilisables lorsque le temps de paix sera venu pour l'industrie belge.

C'est guidées par ces motifs, qu'ont été prises avec la collaboration du ministère belge compétent, en août 1915, mes ordonnances contre l'oisiveté, qui furent complétées par l'ordonnance du 15 mai 1916.

Ces arrêtés ne prévoient le travail forcé que lorsqu'un sans-travail, à qui un salaire confortable a été offert en rapport avec ses capacités de travail, refuse de travailler sans raisons suffisantes et, par là, tombe à la charge de la bienfaisance publique. Sera reconnu expressément comme motif de refus légitime celui qui se base sur le droit des gens. Ainsi aucun travailleur ne peut être forcé à participer à des entreprises de guerre. Les ordonnances reposent sur des considérations saines et conformes au droit qui, sans aucun doute, subordonnent la liberté de l'individu aux intérêts de la collectivité.

Il s'agit, après que les situations existant déjà en 1915 nous ont menés depuis ce temps-là à une calamité publique, de donner simplement une interprétation plus efficace à cette ordonnance.

Dans ce but, les listes nominatives des chômeurs doivent être données par le bourgmestre. Aux chômeurs qui sont inscrits sur ces listes, on offre, dans des réunions de présentation, du travail moyennant un bon salaire, et il est vrai, comme dans le domaine du Gouvernement général il n'y a qu'une quantité restreinte de chômeurs qui puisse être utilisée, que ce travail doit être accompli en Allemagne.

Les chômeurs qui n'acceptent pas le travail qui leur est offert dans ces réunions

de présentation sont conduits de force en Allemagne. Ils reçoivent aussi néanmoins un salaire, mais moindre que celui de ceux qui se sont laissés enrôler comme travailleurs libres.

J'espère que l'on ne devra faire application de ces mesures que dans des cas exceptionnels. Une grande partie du simple peuple a, dans son intelligence, saine, justement compris cette affaire, et c'est par dizaines de milliers que des ouvriers belges se sont rendus déjà en Allemagne, où, placés sur le même pied que les ouvriers allemands, ils ont mérité des salaires plus élevés que ceux qu'ils avaient jamais connus en Belgique et où, contrairement à leurs compagnons demeurés en Belgique dans la misère, eux et leurs familles ont efficacement repris le dessus.

Vous devrez avouer, après ces détails, que, grâce au transport des chômeurs belges en Allemagne, les intérêts économiques de la Belgique sont entièrement sauvegardés.

Lorsque vous instruisez de cette manière les sans-travail, vous leur rendez un meilleur service que quand vous les amenez à refuser de travailler et quand vous obligez par là les autorités allemandes à prendre des mesures sévères.

S'il faut user de dureté lors de l'enlèvement et aussi si des travailleurs occupés sont enlevés, la faute en incombe aux bourgmestres qui se sont refusés à remettre les listes des chômeurs, ou dont les listes étaient incomplètes.

Le Gouverneur général,
BARON VON BISSING, *Generaloberst.*

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 3, 1916.

TO THE COMMISSION OF LABOUR UNIONS.

In reply to your communication of October 30, 1916, in which you beg me to refrain from the deportation of the unemployed to Germany, I inform you that I am unable to grant your request.

Since the beginning of the war a large number of Belgian workmen have been unemployed. The reasons for this are, on the one hand, the inactivity of many industrial plants because of the lack of raw materials which the enemy's policy of isolation has brought about, and, on the other hand, a disinclination to work.

The long duration of this state of affairs has begun to manifest serious consequences, and as Governor of the occupied territory I am in duty bound, in virtue of the principles of international law, to take the necessary measures to prevent these consequences.

As early as the spring of 1915 far-seeing Belgians pointed out to me the dangers of unemployment and of the disinclination to work. They dwelt particularly upon the fact that charitable aid, no matter what its source, would in the end be harmful to the political economy of Belgium, and that it would induce idleness. The consequence of this state of affairs is that the workmen depreciate morally and physically; particularly qualified workmen will lose their capability and their dexterity, and also, when peace comes, will be incapable of working for Belgian industries.

In accordance with this idea, and in collaboration with the competent Belgian ministries, my notices against this antagonism to work were posted in August 1915, and were afterward supplemented by the regulations of May 15, 1916.

These regulations did not provide forced labour except in the case of an unemployed labourer who, without sufficient cause and for adequate wages, should refuse to do work suited to his capacity, his support, in consequence, falling upon the public charities.

Any cause based on international law will be recognized as a legitimate reason for refusal. Thus no workman can be obliged to take part *in military operations*. These ordinances rest on wholesome considerations, which properly place the interests of the commonwealth above those of individual liberty.

It is now a question solely of the efficacious application of these ordinances,

after the anomaly which already existed in 1915 had been changed, in the course of time, into a public calamity.

For this purpose lists of names of unemployed are demanded of the mayors. When the men are assembled to be presented to the authorities, well-paid employment is offered to the unemployed whose names are on the lists; it is true that this work must be performed in Germany because in the territory of the General Government only a limited number of unemployed can be used.

The unemployed who do not accept the work offered them at these meetings for registry are taken by force to Germany. They also receive a salary there, but less than that given to those who permit themselves to be enrolled as free workmen.

I hope that these measures will not have to be applied except in unusual cases. A large part of the ordinary population has, through its good sense, perfectly understood the condition of affairs, and Belgian workmen by tens of thousands have already gone to Germany, where, placed on the same footing as the German workmen, they earn wages higher than those they ever knew in Belgium, and where, instead of living in misery like their comrades who remain in Belgium, they raise their economic situation as well as that of their families.

You must admit, after these details, that, thanks to the transfer of the Belgian unemployed to Germany, the economic interests of Belgium are entirely safeguarded.

When you influence the unemployed in this manner, you render them a better service than when you induce them to refuse to work, and when, thereby, you oblige the German authorities to take severe measures.

If it should be necessary to employ harshness in the seizures, and if employed workmen are taken away, the fault will lie at the door of the burgomasters who refused to give the lists of the unemployed, or whose lists were incomplete.

The Governor-General,
VON BISSING, *General in Chief.*

Réplique des Syndicats socialistes et indépendants au GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL

BRUXELLES, *le 14 novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Les secrétaires et les représentants des syndicats socialistes et indépendants ont pris connaissance, avec une déception pénible, de la réponse que vous avez bien voulu donner à leur invitation du 30 octobre, concernant la déportation d'ouvriers en Allemagne, et c'est au nom de la classe ouvrière unie et consciente que nous risquons un dernier effort, pour empêcher l'attentat sans précédent fait à sa liberté, à ses sentiments et à sa dignité.

Vous nous dites que de nombreuses usines sont arrêtées "par suite du manque de matières premières provenant du blocus de l'ennemi."

Permettez-nous, Excellence, de vous rappeller que les Alliés ont clairement fait connaître leur intention de permettre l'importation en Belgique des matières premières nécessaires à notre industrie, à la condition toute naturelle que l'on ne ferait plus d'autres réquisitions que celles qui sont conformes à l'article 52 des Conventions de La Haye, c'est-à-dire nécessaires "pour les besoins de l'armée d'occupation," et qu'une commission internationale, la C.R.B. (Commission du ravitaillement belge), aurait le droit de contrôler la destination des produits fabriqués.

Au lieu de consentir à un pareil accord, nous avons vu enlever systématiquement par le pouvoir occupant: les machines-outils, les tours, foreuses et raboteuses, machines motrices et les matières premières; métaux, cuirs, laines, cotons, huiles; nous avons vu réquisitionner les produits fabriqués, limiter la production et augmenter sans cesse les difficultés pour le trafic commercial. Quand les communes et les comités ont voulu occuper les chômeurs à des travaux d'utilité publique, toutes sortes d'obstacles leur ont été opposés et finalement, en bien des cas, leur initiative a été entravée et brisée. En un mot, au fur et à mesure que les plus infatigables efforts étaient faits pour occuper le plus de bras possible, on créa sans cesse de nouveaux chômeurs.

Vous nous dites également que le chômage provient du mauvais vouloir.

Tout le passé de notre classe ouvrière se dresse avec la plus grande énergie contre cette inculpation. Où est, dans le monde entier, la classe ouvrière qui a fait d'un si petit pays, une si grande puissance commerciale et industrielle ? Et nous qui, depuis vingt-cinq ans, avons été les témoins enthousiastes des efforts admirables accomplis par nos compagnons de travail, en vue de leur amélioration morale et matérielle, nous affirmons avec insistance que ce n'est pas dans leurs rangs que l'on trouvera des êtres assez bas pour préférer l'aumône d'un secours à peine suffisant pour se nourrir, à un salaire honnêtement gagné par un travail libre et fécond.

La vérité est que les ouvriers belges, d'accord avec le même article de la Convention de La Haye, lequel ne prévoit des réquisitions de main-d'œuvre que " pour les besoins de l'armée d'occupation " et dans le cas " où elles n'entraînent pas l'obligation de participer aux opérations de guerre contre leur patrie," ont décliné opiniâtrément les offres les plus séduisantes parce qu'ils ne voulaient pas travailler aux tranchées, ni à la restauration des forts, ni dans les usines qui produisent du matériel destiné à l'armée. Ceci était leur droit et c'était leur devoir. Leur attitude mérite le respect et non pas la plus humiliante des peines.

Vous invoquez vos arrêtés du 15 août 1915 et du 15 mai 1916, qui prévoient des peines à l'égard des ouvriers assistés qui refuseraient un travail " correspondant à leurs capacités," qui leur serait offert contre " un salaire convenable." Ceux qui savent avec quel soin et avec quelle exactitude méticuleuse les conditions que doivent remplir les ouvriers pour avoir droit à des subsides sont rédigées et contrôlées, seront peut-être d'avis que ces menaces étaient pour le moins inutiles. Mais, comme vous dites, ces ordonnances mêmes stipulent dans leur article 2 que " toute raison motivant le refus de travailler sera admissible si elle est acceptée par le droit des gens."

Pour ces cas de refus, l'autorité se réservait de transférer les récalcitrants devant les tribunaux belges et plus tard devant des conseils de guerre. Il est par conséquent certain que les chômeurs ont le droit de refuser le travail pour l'un ou l'autre motif approuvé par le droit des gens. Et on a beau dire qu'il ne s'agit pas ici de contraindre l'ouvrier à participer à des entreprises de guerre, il n'est, hélas ! que trop clair que chaque Belge déporté en Allemagne va y prendre la place d'un homme qui, demain, ira renforcer les rangs de l'armée ennemie. Nous voudrions par conséquent savoir, Excellence, si ces tribunaux fonctionnent.

Vous appréhendez que le chômage persistant ne diminue matériellement et moralement la valeur des ouvriers. Nous qui les connaissons, nous avons plus de confiance en eux ; nous les avons vus souffrir avec une fermeté qui ne caractérise que les âmes fières et élevées. N'est-ce pas de leur milieu qu'est partie la belle idée d'organiser, dans tout le pays, un réseau étendu d'œuvres d'enseignement pour les chômeurs, afin de développer leurs connaissances techniques et pour relever le niveau de leurs capacités professionnelles ? Le Comité national ne fut, hélas ! pas autorisé à lancer cette grandiose entreprise. Pense-t-on que ce sera par un travail forcé, exécuté la mort au cœur, à la manière des esclaves, que nos frères conserveront leur énergie matérielle et morale ?

Vous appréhendez également que " les secours, d'où qu'ils viennent, ne pèsent en fin de compte sur l'économie nationale belge." Nous avons de la peine à croire que des Belges aient eu, comme vous nous le communiquez, le triste courage de reprocher d'une telle façon l'âpre morceau de pain et le peu de soupe dont beaucoup de familles d'ouvriers vivent depuis des mois. Au reste, que représent la douzaine de millions de francs que reçoivent chaque mois cinq à six cent mille chômeurs en comparaison des destructions innombrables de biens et de vies humaines qu'ont coûtées et que coûtent encore à notre pays les horreurs de la guerre, une guerre dont il n'est pas le moins du monde responsable ? Avec la foi la plus inébranlable dans notre destinée future, nous, les premiers intéressés, savons qu'à cet égard la Flandre et la Wallonie se dresseront glorieusement devant l'histoire.

Excellence, notre cœur et notre raison se refusent donc à croire que ce soit pour le bien de notre classe, et en vue d'épargner un désastre de plus à notre pays, que des milliers d'ouvriers ont été enlevés brusquement à leurs familles et sont déportés en Allemagne. L'opinion publique ne s'est pas trompée, et, comme un écho

des plaintes douloureuses des victimes, retentissent les protestations indignées de la population unanime, exprimées par ses mandataires, par ses magistrats communaux, par ses assemblées législatives, qui sont l'incarnation la plus élevée du droit dans notre pays.

En outre, la façon arbitraire et brutale avec laquelle on procède dans l'exécution de ces tristes mesures a fait disparaître tout doute au sujet du but visé : il s'agit avant tout de procurer de la main-d'œuvre à l'Allemagne, à son propre profit et pour la réussite de ses armes.

Alors qu'à Anvers on ne choisit que parmi les jeunes gens soumis au contrôle, âgés de dix-sept à trente et un ans, dans le Borinage on a appelé tous les hommes de dix-sept à cinquante ans, dans le Brabant wallon tous les hommes de plus de dix-sept ans sans faire de distinction entre chômeurs et non-chômeurs. On a pris des gens de toutes professions et de toutes conditions ; des boulangers, par exemple, qui n'ont jamais cessé de travailler dans nos coopératives du Borinage, des mécaniciens qui ont toujours travaillé, des agriculteurs, des commerçants. . . . A Lessines, le 6 de ce mois, 2100 personnes ont été déportées, tous les ouvriers jusqu'à l'âge de cinquante ans ! On cite divers cas de vieillards qui sont exilés de force avec cinq ou six de leurs fils !

Des scènes déchirantes ont lieu partout ; les malheureux, rassemblés sur les places publiques, font l'objet d'une rapide sélection ; ils ont été invités à se munir d'un léger bagage ; ils sont ensuite conduits à la gare et chargés dans des wagons à bestiaux ; ils ne peuvent pas dire un dernier adieu à leur famille et n'ont pas le moindre temps pour mettre de l'ordre dans leurs affaires, pas même dans les plus urgentes ; ils ne savent pas où ils vont, ni pour quel travail, ni pour combien de temps. Déportés à l'approche de l'hiver, après deux années de privations n'ayant plus de ressources, ils n'ont pas le moyen de se pourvoir de vêtements chauds ni des chaussures indispensables. Quelles privations auront-ils à subir ? Comment vivront-ils là-bas ? Comment en reviendront-ils ? Mystère et anxiété qui font sans cesse verser des larmes aux mères et aux petits enfants. L'oppression et l'angoisse règnent dans les familles.

Excellence, ne restez pas insensible à ces souffrances et à ces larmes ! Ne laissez pas souiller notre passé de liberté et d'indépendance ! Ne laissez pas violer les droits de l'homme en ce qu'ils ont de plus sacré ! Ne laissez pas fouler aux pieds la dignité de l'ouvrier que notre classe a travaillé à conquérir pendant tant de siècles !

C'est au droit et à l'humanité que nous faisons appel, solennellement, avec le vif espoir d'être écoutés, car, nous en sommes profondément convaincus, par notre voix, c'est la grande voix de la classe ouvrière du monde entier qui, en ce moment tragique, clame sa douleur et ses protestations.

Agréez, Excellence, l'assurance de notre plus profond respect.

[Suivent les signatures des membres du Comité national et de la Commission syndicale de la Belgique.]

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 14, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—The secretaries and the representatives of the socialistic and independent labour unions of Belgium have, with the most painful disappointment, taken cognizance of the answer that you were good enough to make to their petition of October 30, concerning the deportation of labourers to Germany, and it is in the name of the working classes as a united whole that we make a final effort to prevent the consummation of an act without precedent against its liberty, its sentiments, and its dignity.

You say that many industrial works have been closed on account of the lack of raw materials which the enemy's policy of isolation has brought about. Permit us, Excellency, to recall to your mind the fact that the Allied Powers manifested very clearly their willingness to allow the importation into Belgium of raw materials required by our industries, provided—and it is a very natural provision

—that no requisitions be made except those mentioned in Article 52 of The Hague Convention—that is to say, those necessary to the "occupying army," and that an international commission, the Commission for Relief in Belgium, have the right to supervise the destination of the manufactured products.

Instead of agreeing to such a proposal, we have seen the occupying authorities systematically remove the machinery, implements, machines of all kinds, engines, and raw materials, metals, leather, wood, limit the production, and continually aggravate the difficulties of the transactions. When the districts and the committees have attempted to employ workmen without work in public improvements, so many obstacles were thrown in their way that in many cases their initiative was checked and broken. In a word, as fast as the most tireless efforts were put forth to employ the greatest number possible, other men were thrown out of work.

You state also that unemployment is caused by the labourers' hostility to work. The whole past of our working class protests against this accusation with the utmost energy.

Where is there to be found in the whole world a working class that has made of such a small country such a large industrial and commercial power? And we, who for the last twenty-five years have been the enthusiastic witnesses of the magnificent efforts of our brother-workmen for their material and moral betterment, we proudly affirm that it is not among their ranks that one can find men so debased that they prefer to receive charitable assistance, which barely furnishes them with sufficient food, to an honest salary given in remuneration for a free and profitable work.

The truth is that the Belgian workmen, in conformity with the same Article of The Hague Convention, which admits requisition of labour only "for the needs of the army of occupation and provided these requisitions do not imply an obligation to take part in the war against their country," have refused the most tempting offers, not wishing to build trenches or to repair forts, or to work in factories manufacturing war materials. This was their right and their duty Their attitude deserves respect and not the most humiliating of punishments.

You refer to your decrees of August 1915 and of May 15, 1916, mentioning possible punishment for workmen receiving support who refuse work suited to their capacities and recompensed by a proper salary. Those who know with what care the conditions have been established under which the unemployed have the right to receive assistance will find that these menaces are, to say the least, useless. But as you yourself declare, these decrees provide in their Article 2 that every motive for refusal to work will be considered valid if it is admitted by international law.

In the cases of refusal the German authorities reserved the right to cause these recalcitrants to appear before Belgian tribunals, and later before military tribunals. It is therefore certain that the unemployed have the right to refuse to work for any reason approved by international law. Summoned before the tribunal, they have the right to employ defence and to use their reasons of refusal. It is well enough to say that it is not a question of obliging the workmen to participate in military enterprises; it is only too apparent that every Belgian deported to Germany will take the place there of a man who to-morrow will go to reinforce the ranks of the enemy. We should like to know, Excellency, whether these tribunals carry on their functions.

You fear that continued unemployment depreciates the physical and moral status of the workmen. We who know them have more confidence in them. We have seen them suffer with a stoicism that does not exist save in proud and lofty souls. Did not the splendid idea of organizing throughout the entire country a vast chain of educational schools for the unemployed in order to develop their technical knowledge and to increase their professional value, come from them? The Comité National was not, alas! allowed to attempt this magnificent enterprise. Is it the opinion, then, that through forced labour our unhappy brothers, like slaves, will keep up their physical and moral energy?

You fear also that the assistance that they receive will at last be a heavy economic charge on the Belgian national resources. It is with difficulty that we can

believe that Belgians, as you inform us, would have the melancholy courage to begrudge in such a way the bitter piece of bread and the drop of soup which have for so many months formed the sustenance of so many working families; and, after all, what do the twelve millions amount to that each month are distributed among six hundred thousand unemployed, in comparison to the destruction of property and lives without number, which has been and is still being brought to our country, as a result of the horrors of a war for which it has not the slightest responsibility? With the most energetic faith in our destinies, we, the most deeply interested, know that in the near future Flanders and Wallonie will rise again, glorious, in history.

Excellency, our heart and our reason refuse to believe that it is for the good of our class, and in order to avoid an additional calamity to our country, that thousands of workers are harshly torn from their families and transported to Germany. Public sentiment has not been deceived, and to the unhappy complaints of the victims are added protests from the entire population, as expressed by its representatives, its communal magistrates, and those persons who constitute the highest incarnation of law in our country.

Furthermore, the arbitrary and brutal manner employed in the execution of these unhappy measures has dispelled all doubts as to the object in view. The question above all is to obtain workmen in Germany for Germany's profit and for the success of her arms.

While at Antwerp they did not take any young men from the ages of seventeen to thirty-one who were under the regime of control; in the Borinage they called all the men of seventeen to fifty years of age; in Walloon Brabant, all men over seventeen years, making no distinction between employed and unemployed. Men of all professions and of all conditions have been taken—bakers, who have never ceased to work in our co-operatives in the Borinage, for example, mechanics who always had employment, agricultural workmen, merchants. . . . At Lessines on the 6th instant 2100 persons were taken away, all workmen under sixty years of age. Several cases are recorded where old men with five or six sons have been taken thus by force to be exiled.

Distressing scenes occur everywhere. The unhappy ones grouped together in the public squares are quickly divided. They are directed to take with them a small amount of baggage; they are taken at once to the railway-station and loaded into the cattle-cars. They are not allowed to say good-bye to their families. No opportunity is given them to put their affairs in order; even the most pressing matters must be left. They do not know where they are going, nor for what work, nor for how long. They are taken away at the beginning of the winter, after two years of privations, having no further resources and no means to provide themselves with warm clothing, nor even with the indispensable. What privations are they going to endure? How long will they live there? In what state will they return? This ignorance and anxiety are the cause of the ceaseless tears of the mothers and small children. Distress and despair reign in all homes.

Heed these tears and these sobs, Excellency. Do not permit our free and intact past to go to ruin. Do not permit human right to be violated in its holy of holies. Do not permit the dignity of our working classes, which has been acquired after so many centuries of effort, to be trampled underfoot.

We solemnly appeal to law and to humanity, with the hope of being heard, for we have the profound conviction that our voice at this tragic hour is the great voice of the working class of the entire civilized world, which expresses its sorrow and its protest.

Accept, Excellency, the homage of our most distinguished consideration.

[Here follow the signatures of the members of the Comité National and of the Commission syndicale de la Belgique.]

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium.

NOTE 3 (see p. 272).

Protestation des Sénateurs et Représentants de l'arrondissement de Mons

MONS, *le 2 novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Députés et sénateurs de l'arrondissement de Mons, nous avons pour devoir de protester énergiquement contre les levées d'hommes valides auxquelles l'autorité militaire procède en ce moment dans notre région, et de porter à votre connaissance la juste réprobation qu'elles soulèvent.

Les faits se passent de la manière suivante :

Des placards ordonnent aux citoyens âgés de dix-sept ans et plus de se rendre tel jour, à telle heure, en un lieu désigné, sous menace, en cas de désobéissance, des peines les plus sévères, ou bien, disent certaines affiches, sous peine, pour le contrevenant, d'être déclaré chômeur.

Les hommes rassemblés sont parqués en plusieurs groupes.

Un premier triage élimine plusieurs catégories : prêtres, médecins, professeurs, vieillards, infirmes, etc.

Après quoi la sélection s'opère.

Tous ceux que les recruteurs choisissent sont mis à part et dirigés, sous bonne escorte, vers la gare où un train les attend. Les autres sont renvoyés dans leurs foyers.

Nous ne savons suivant quelle règle le choix se fait : on enrôle les chômeurs, mais aussi beaucoup d'autres personnes qui n'ont jamais chômé et appartenant aux professions les plus diverses : bouchers, boulangers, patrons, tailleurs, ouvriers brasseurs, électriciens, cultivateurs ; on prend aussi de tout jeunes gens élèves d'athénées, d'universités et autres écoles supérieures, et, d'autre part, des chefs de famille d'un certain âge, ayant charge de nombreux enfants.

Les procédés de recrutement sont divers : parfois l'officier recruteur se base sur les listes de population, parfois il exige la production de la carte d'identité. Il lui arrive aussi de s'efforcer d'obtenir le consentement des personnes convoquées. Quelques engagements ont été souscrits, sur lesquels il est stipulé que la durée est fixée à quatre mois, le salaire à 5 marks, le logement choisi par l'autorité allemande et que le voyage sera gratuit à l'aller, le lieu de destination reste indéterminé. Le plus souvent, les signatures sont données sous l'empire de la crainte ou sous l'effet de la promesse de quelques jours de répit avant le départ.

Les hommes enrôlés par contrainte partent sans que leur famille sache vers quel pays ni pour combien de temps. Au début, ils se présentaient sans vivres, sans linge ni vêtements de rechange, ne sachant pas le sort qui les attendait.

C'est un spectacle douloureux que celui de la séparation inopinée et brutale des membres d'une famille, sans communication, sans adieu !

Le chagrin, l'anxiété et l'indignation ont envahi bien des foyers. Cette déportation est la pire des peines. Elle révolte le sentiment le plus fier et le plus profond de notre race, l'amour de la liberté, de la liberté du travail surtout et l'attachement au sol natal.

L'autorité militaire a déclaré, à plusieurs reprises, que si elle procédait à pareil enrôlement, c'est parce que les bourgmestres ont refusé de désigner eux-mêmes les chômeurs de leurs communes.

Faut-il défendre les bourgmestres de ce reproche ?

Nous l'affirmons fermement : il n'est pas justifié. Tous les bourgmestres ont fait afficher l'ordre de l'autorité qui requiert les chômeurs de se faire inscrire sur les registres tenus par l'Administration communale. En se conformant à cette injonction, les bourgmestres ont fait tout ce qu'ils devaient ; ils ne pouvaient rien faire de plus, les lois de notre pays ne leur permettant pas, en effet, de s'introduire chez les particuliers et de se livrer à des recherches sur leur état social : le Belge est maître chez lui et ne doit compte à personne de ses conditions d'existence.

Le bourgmestre qui se serait permis de dresser lui-même la liste des chômeurs et l'aurait livrée à l'autorité militaire, se serait attiré la malédiction publique. En agissant ainsi, il se serait associé au coup de force qui va contraindre un grand

nombre de nos concitoyens à se rendre en Allemagne pour effectuer le travail le plus rebutant et le plus odieux, celui dont l'effet se tourne contre la patrie.

Sans doute, on a dit que les travailleurs ne seraient embauchés que pour les entreprises étrangères à la guerre ; mais que vaut pareille explication ?

En prenant la place d'un ouvrier allemand, l'ouvrier belge permet de remplir un vide dans l'armée allemande.

Travailler pour l'Allemagne, c'est se battre contre la patrie.

Aussi l'instinct public ne s'y est pas trompé : il a résisté aux appels les plus pressants et aux promesses les plus alléchantes affichées sur nos murs. Très rares sont ceux que l'appât de gros salaires a attirés en Allemagne.

La presse a taxé notre population ouvrière de fainéantise : c'est la calomnier.

Les Belges ne sont pas des paresseux, mais ils aiment leur pays et ils ont conscience des devoirs sacrés que la guerre leur impose. Nul homme d'honneur ne peut les blâmer de leur résistance.

Nous avons tenu, Excellence, à vous exposer ces faits afin que vous puissiez employer votre haute autorité à mettre un terme à une violation flagrante du droit des gens.

Quant à nous, nous eussions manqué à nos devoirs de mandataires publics si nous n'avions fait entendre la voix de notre conscience dans un moment aussi grave et aussi douloureux.

Agréez, Excellence, l'expression de notre considération la plus distinguée.

Sénateurs : MOSSELMAN, ROLAND, VICOMTE VILAIN XIIII, DEMEERE.

Représentants : ALPH. HARMIGNIE, MASSON, BASTIEN, MARIOLLE, BRENEZ, SERVAIS.

À Son Excellence le Général von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

EXCELLENCY,—We, the deputies and senators of the district of Mons, feel it our duty to protest vigorously against the impressment of able-bodied men which is being carried out in our region at this moment by the German military authorities, and to bring to your attention the just reproach which it deserves.

The events occur as follows :

Posters direct citizens over seventeen years of age to present themselves on a certain day at a certain hour and place, under penalty of severe punishment for disobedience or, as certain posters declare, under penalty of being considered unemployed.

The men assembled are grouped in several divisions.

A preliminary division eliminates a number of classes—priests, doctors, professors, old men, sick, etc.

Thereupon the selection takes place.

All those who are chosen are placed at one side and led under strong guard to the station, where a train awaits them ; the others are liberated. We do not know what rules are followed in making the choice. Unemployed men are taken, but also many others, who have never been without work, in various professions : butchers, bakers, master tailors, brewers, electricians, farmers ; very young people are taken as well, high school students, university students, and those attending other higher schools ; and, on the other hand, heads of families already past middle age who have several children to care for.

The manner of recruiting varies. Sometimes the recruiting officer depends upon the size of the population, sometimes he requires the persons to show their identification-cards ; he sometimes tries to gain the consent of the person summoned. Some contracts have been signed where it is stipulated that the duration is limited to four months, the wages at five marks, the lodgings chosen by the German authorities, and the outgoing transportation free ; the point of destination is not determined.

More often the signatures are obtained by intimidation or as the result of a promise of several days' delay before being sent away.

The men enrolled by force leave without the knowledge of their families as to where they are going and for how long. At first they present themselves without provisions, linen, or extra clothing, ignorant of the fate awaiting them.

It is a sad spectacle, the unexpected and brutal separation of members of a family without a word, without saying good-bye.

Sorrow, anxiety, and indignation have filled many, many homes. This deportation is the worst of punishments. It revolts the proudest and most deeply felt sentiments of our race, the love of liberty, particularly of the freedom of work, and the attachment to the land of birth.

The military authorities have declared on several occasions that such enrolments were made only because the mayors themselves refused to point out those who were unemployed in their communes.

Is it necessary to defend the mayors against such an accusation?

We state firmly that it is not justified. All the mayors have caused to be posted the orders of the authorities requiring the unemployed to register in the books in the possession of the communal administration. In obeying that order the mayors have done everything that they should have done; they could not have done more. As a matter of fact the laws of our country do not permit them to enter the homes of private individuals and to proceed to make investigations as to their social status; the Belgian is his own master in his home, and he owes it to no one to account for his mode of existence.

Any mayor who would have gone so far as to make a list of the unemployed and to hand it to the military authorities would have called down upon himself the curses of his people. In so doing he would have taken part in a measure of force which is going to compel a large number of our fellow-citizens to go to Germany to carry out most repulsive and most odious work—work the results of which are to be used against the native land.

It is invariably said that the workers will not be employed except on projects that are not of a military nature. But what is such an explanation worth?

In taking the place of a German workman the Belgian workman permits a gap in the German army to be filled.

To work for Germany is to fight against one's country.

And the instinct of the public is not deceived. It has resisted the most pressing appeals, the most tempting promises posted on its walls. Very few in number are those whose lust for large wages tempted them into Germany.

The Press has called our working population indolent. This is an insult.

The Belgians are not lazy, but they love their country and they realize the sacred duty that the war imposes. No man of honour can blame them for their resistance.

We have felt obliged, Excellency, to recite these facts to you in order that you may use your high authority to put an end to this flagrant violation of international law.

As for us, we should have been lacking in our duty if we had not lifted the voice of our conscience at a moment so solemn and so sorrowful.

Accept, Excellency, the expression of our most distinguished consideration.

(*Signatures.*)

To His Excellency General von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

Réponse du GÉNÉRAL VON BISSING *à la protestation des Sénateurs et Représentants de Mons*

BRUXELLES, *le 9 novembre* 1916.

AUX DÉPUTÉS DE MONS.

En réponse à votre lettre du 2 novembre 1916, dans laquelle vous nous priiez de renoncer à la déportation des chômeurs vers l'Allemagne, j'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que votre demande ne pourra être prise en considération.

Depuis le début de la guerre, une grande partie de la population belge chôme. Les raisons qui créent cette situation sont, d'une part, l'inactivité de beaucoup d'établissements industriels provoquée par la pénurie de matières premières résultant du blocus ennemi, d'autre part, la mauvaise volonté mise à travailler.

La longue durée de cette situation commence à faire apparaître de fâcheux résultats, et, en qualité de gouverneur du pays occupé, S E. le Gouverneur général de Belgique, se basant sur le droit des gens, a pour devoir de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour parer à cet état de choses.

Des Belges éclairés se sont déjà adressés au printemps 1915 à S.E. le Gouverneur général et ont démontré les dangers du chômage et de l'aversion du travail.

Ils ont montré que les secours, quelle que soit leur provenance, finissent par peser sur la population et entraînent en même temps les ouvriers dans l'oisiveté.

Mais cela aurait pour conséquence que les ouvriers s'affaibliraient physiquement et moralement et que, en particulier, les ouvriers instruits perdraient leurs aptitudes et leur dextérité et qu'ils deviendraient inutilisables pour l'industrie belge lorsque la paix future serait rétablie.

Pour ces raisons, les arrêtés pris contre le chômage ont été mis en vigueur en août 1915 avec l'aide du ministère belge compétent et complétés plus tard par l'arrêté du 15 mai 1916.

Ces arrêtés ne prévoient la contrainte au travail que si le chômeur refuse sans motifs suffisants, pour un salaire proportionné, qui lui est offert, un travail conforme à ses aptitudes et tombe par là à charge de la bienfaisance publique.

Toute infraction contraire au droit des gens est formellement reconnue comme motif de refus fondé. Donc aucun ouvrier ne pourra être contraint à prendre part à des *travaux de guerre*. Ces arrêtés reposent sur des considérations saines, conformes à la loi, et qu'ordonnent, sans doute possible, l'intérêt de la masse et la liberté de chacun. Il ne s'agit plus ici que de l'application, après que les situations qui s'étaient présentées avaient conduit à une calamité publique.

À cet effet, les listes nominatives des chômeurs devront nous être adressées par les bourgmestres. Lors des réunions, il est offert du travail, contre un bon salaire, aux chômeurs mentionnés sur la liste, et ce travail doit être effectué en Allemagne, vu que, dans le territoire du Gouvernement général seul, un nombre limité de chômeurs pourront être employés.

Les chômeurs qui, lors de ces réunions, refusent le travail offert seront dirigés de force en Allemagne.

Ils obtiennent aussi un salaire, mais plus petit que celui qu'ils auraient eu s'ils s'étaient engagés comme travailleurs libres. Le Gouverneur général espère qu'il ne devra faire usage de ces mesures que dans des cas exceptionnels.

Une grande partie du peuple a, avec sa compréhension saine des choses, jugé la situation d'une manière exacte, et c'est par dizaines de mille que les ouvriers belges ont pris librement le chemin de l'Allemagne où, mis sur le même pied que les ouvriers allemands, ils gagnent des salaires plus élevés que ceux qu'ils ont jamais connus en Belgique et où, au lieu de tomber dans la misère comme leurs compagnons restés au pays, ils élèvent leurs familles à un rang plus élevé.

D'après ceci, vous devez accorder que par les déportations des chômeurs belges en Allemagne, l'intérêt du peuple belge reste entièrement sauf. Si vous vous adressez dans ce sens aux chômeurs, vous leur rendrez un meilleur service qu'en les entraînant dans la voie du refus de travailler, et contraindre par là les autorités allemandes à des mesures sévères.

Si, lors de la déportation, il y a de la sévérité et qu'il y a des ouvriers actifs qui sont enlevés, la faute incombe aux bourgmestres qui se sont refusés à donner les listes ou bien dont les listes étaient incomplètes.

Pour le Gouverneur général,
(*Signature*).

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 9, 1916.

TO THE DEPUTIES OF MONS.

In reply to your letter of November 2, 1916, in which you ask us to give up the deportation of unemployed toward Germany, I have the honour to inform you that your request cannot be taken into consideration.

From the beginning of the war a great part of the Belgian population has been idle. The reasons that created that situation are, on the one hand, the inactivity of many industrial establishments, brought about by the lack of raw materials resulting from the enemy blockade, and on the other, by the lack

of a desire to work. The long duration of this situation begins to bring about evil results, and in his capacity of Governor of the occupied country His Excellency the Governor-General of Belgium, under the international law, finds it his duty to take the necessary measures to remedy such a state of things.

Enlightened Belgians as early as the spring of 1915 addressed themselves to H.E. the Governor-General and pointed out the dangers of unemployment and of an aversion to work.

They showed him that charity, wherever it came from, will finish by becoming a weight on the population, and at the same time lead the working people to idleness.

That would have as a consequence the physical and moral enfeeblement of the working men, and that skilled workers in particular would lose their aptitude and dexterity and would become useless for Belgian industry as soon as the future peace was re-established.

For these reasons the decrees issued against the unemployment were put in vigour in August 1915 with the aid of the proper Belgian ministry, and have later been completed by the decree of May 15, 1916.

These decrees did not envisage compulsory labour except in the case when the unemployed should refuse, without sufficient motives, for a proper salary offered to him, work suitable to his abilities, and he become a charge on public charity.

Every infraction contrary to international law is formally recognized as a founded motive to refuse this work. Therefore no working man can be compelled to take part in war-labour. These decrees are founded on wholesome considerations in conformity with the law, and which respect without any possible doubt the interest of the masses and the liberty of each person. It is merely a question of the application [of measures taken ?] after the situations which had been presented had led to a public calamity.

To this effect the lists of the names of the unemployed must be addressed to us by the burgomasters. At the assemblies work is offered for good wages to the unemployed mentioned on the list, and this work must be carried out in Germany, whereas in the territory of the General Government only a limited number of unemployed may be employed.

The unemployed who in these assemblies refuse the work offered will be sent by force to Germany. They gain wages also, but smaller than that which they would have had as free labourers. The Governor-General hopes that it will be necessary to use these measures only on exceptional occasions.

The greater part of the people has, with its sound comprehension of things, judged the situation in a correct manner, and by tens of thousands Belgian working men have freely taken the road to Germany, where, put on the same footing with German working men, they earn wages higher than those which they ever knew in Belgium, and instead of falling into misery like their comrades remaining in the country, they raise their families to a higher rank.

After this, you must admit that by the deportations of the Belgian unemployed in Germany the interest of the Belgian people rests entirely safe. If you speak to the unemployed in this sense you will render them a better service than you would do by leading them to refuse to work, and by that means force the German authorities to take severe measures.

If at the time of the deportation there is severity, and if employed working men are taken away, the fault will rest on the burgomasters who refuse to give the lists or whose lists are not complete."

For the Governor-General,
(*Signature*).

[*Note.*—The French employed by the Germans is often exceedingly difficult to translate!—B. W.]

Réplique des Sénateurs et Représentants de Mons au
GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL VON BISSING

MONS, *le 27 novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Nous avons pris connaissance de la réponse en date du 9 novembre, que Votre Excellence a bien voulu faire à notre lettre du 2 novembre,

laquelle nous est parvenue par l'entremise du Comité provincial de Secours et d'Alimentation de Mons, à qui elle a été adressée.

Témoins de l'enrôlement dans notre région, nous avons la conviction que l'exécution des arrêtés relatifs au chômage a eu lieu en violation flagrante des considérations que vous nous exposez. Nous ne pouvons que repéter que le mobile de cette opération n'a pas été de procurer du travail aux chômeurs ni de décharger la bienfaisance publique de l'entretien de gens sans emploi.

Permettez-nous de vous signaler quelques faits à titre d'exemple :

À Quaregnon, sur 1000 ouvriers appelés au contrôle, 304 ont été déportés. Parmi ceux-ci, il y a 227 non-chômeurs parmi lesquels 4 cultivateurs, 5 patrons boulangers, 6 ouvriers boulangers, un patron boucher, 1 ingénieur brasseur, directeur d'une grande brasserie, un gros négociant, le fils d'un maître de forges, un patron imprimeur.

Il est à noter que le nombre des hommes appelés au contrôle est relativement peu élevé eu égard à la population totale, mais il ne faut pas perdre de vue que nous sommes au centre du bassin houiller et que tous les ouvriers mineurs ont été exemptés.

L'observation s'applique à toutes les autres communes.

À Dour, sur 137 déportés, l'on compte 117 travailleurs dont 9 cultivateurs, 4 étudiants et nombre de petits patrons travaillant chez eux.

À Wasmes, sur 186 déportés, 130 non-chômeurs.

À Frameries, sur 200 déportés, 187 non-chômeurs.

À Hornu, sur 140 déportés, 87 non-chômeurs.

À Pâturages, sur 139 déportés, 134 non-chômeurs.

À Ghlin, sur 155 déportés, 109 non-chômeurs.

À Havré, le bourgmestre a déclaré aux officiers recruteurs que tous les hommes convoqués à l'enrôlement étaient occupés (il avait procédé à une enquête et demandait à faire la preuve). On ne tint pas compte de ses observations et, sur 450 hommes appelés au contrôle, 46 furent déportés, tous occupés.

Des proportions équivalentes se retrouvent dans toutes les communes.

Est-ce un effet du hasard ? Non, la plupart du temps, le choix des ouvriers qui ont du travail en Belgique a été voulu délibérément. Les recruteurs paraisent avoir une prédilection marquée pour les ouvriers les plus exercés de certaines industries : contremaîtres ; ouvriers d'ateliers et de laminoirs, verriers, cordonniers, ajusteurs, électriciens, cultivateurs.

C'est ainsi qu'aux Forges et Laminoirs de Baume à Haine-St.-Pierre, sur 400 ouvriers qui ont passé au contrôle, 52 ont été déportés.

Aux usines Gilson, à La Croyère, 50 ouvriers ont été déportés sur 225 appelés au contrôle.

À la Société La Brugeoise et Nicaise et Delcuve, 56 sur 389.

À la Société anonyme des Laminoirs de La Croyère, 51 sur 73.

Aux usines Boulonneries et Fonderie de La Louvière, 25 sur 131.

Aux ateliers de Bouvy, à La Croyère, 25 sur 145.

À la Compagnie centrale de Construction, à Haine-St.-Pierre, 37 ouvriers et employés travaillant ont été déportés, soit 10 % du personnel occupé.

Aux ateliers Spiltoir, Happez et Meck, à Haine-St.-Paul, 14 ouvriers ont été déportés, ce qui représente 70 % du personnel occupé soumis au contrôle et 40 % de tout le personnel.

Aux Hauts Fourneaux et Fonderies de La Louvière la déportation du personnel a atteint 70 %, ce qui met l'usine dans l'impossibilité de continuer sa fabrication.

Aux usines Boël, à La Louvière, on a enlevé 249 hommes dont un chef de bureau, 10 employés, 21 contremaîtres et 217 ouvriers.

Tous les employés et ouvriers de ces usines qu'on a déportés étaient au travail au moment du contrôle.

À la verrerie de Jemappes, seul établissement de l'espèce dans notre arrondissement, l'application du système est d'un effet saisissant.

Cette usine fut remise en marche le 4 décembre 1915 ; elle a travaillé sans interruption et d'une allure ascendante jusqu'au 1er septembre 1916. Elle dut chômeur jusqu'au 10 novembre pour réparer certains fours, avec le projet d'élargir

son activité. On lui a enlevé plus de la moitié de son personnel d'élite. A titre de précision, nous citons des chiffres :

40 % des souffleurs ;
60 % des premiers gamins de souffleurs ;
30 % des deuxièmes gamins de souffleurs ;
40 % du personnel des repasseurs ;
35 % des étendeurs ;
100 % des ouvriers électriciens ;
100 % des ouvriers ajusteurs, etc. . . .

Quelle perturbation pour cette industrie !

Ce que nous venons de dire de la marche ascendante des verreries de Jemappes s'applique à la plupart des industries dont nous venons de parler.

Nous mettons à part les charbonnages, dont l'activité est considérée avec faveur ; nous voulons surtout parler des ateliers de construction, des laminoirs, des faïenceries, des fabriques de chaussures, des usines de produits céramiques, etc. . . . Aucune de ces industries, grande ou petite, n'a été atteinte par le blocus ou du moins n'a éprouvé d'empêchement majeur de ce chef. Le temps d'arrêt qu'elles ont eu parfois à subir avait pour cause l'interruption des transports, l'insuffisance de combustibles ou de minerais (faute de moyens de transport) et surtout les rigueurs d'arrêtés qui ont frappé de saisie une partie de l'outillage ou qui limitent la durée du travail à un nombre d'heures fort restreint (les fabriques de chaussures).

Les industriels n'ont pas manqué d'exposer aux officiers recruteurs combien il importait, pour la bonne marche de leur exploitation, de laisser leur personnel intact. Leurs observations n'ont pas été écoutées ou guère.

Chose caractéristique et qui révèle la volonté arrêtée de choisir dans des professions ou des catégories déterminées, il est arrivé à l'autorité militaire de faire grouper à part les ouvriers d'usines en pleine activité et d'effectuer leur choix sous les yeux du chef de l'établissement et nonobstant ses protestations ; il en fut ainsi pour les ouvriers des laminoirs de Jemappes, pour ceux des ateliers de constructions de Nimy et des ateliers de Bouvy à La Louvière.

Quels griefs peut-on faire à ces braves gens qu'on arrache à leur famille, qu'on soustrait au travail national, pour les contraindre de travailler au profit de l'Allemagne ?

Quelles infractions ont-ils commises ?

La déportation est une peine cruelle et imméritée pour eux, et pour nous, Belges, un mal national.

À toutes les réquisitions de matières, d'outillages, de chevaux, qui ont déjà fait de si grands ravages, fallait-il que vînt s'ajouter la plus abominable de toutes : celle de l'homme ?

Par le développement de la civilisation, par l'adoption de lois de guerre codifiées dans les conventions internationales, il semblerait que jamais plus un peuple vaincu ne pût être soumis à pareille torture et que la liberté individuelle des habitants paisibles dût désormais être respectée. Tous, chômeurs comme travailleurs, devaient être laissés dans leurs foyers.

Et vit-on jamais population plus calme, plus stoïque dans la souffrance ? Fut-elle jamais l'occasion d'une charge ou d'un souci pour le Gouvernement impérial ?

Vous vous efforcez de rassurer notre patriotisme, Excellence, en nous déclarant que les Belges déportés ne prendront point part à des buts de guerre. . . . Mais ne travaillent-ils donc pas à des buts de guerre tous ceux qui coopèrent d'une manière quelconque aux entreprises des peuples belligérants ? Le cultivateur qui fournit la graisse à l'armée, le tailleur qui façonne des vêtements, le corroyeur, le cordonnier, le bûcheron, le terrassier ne participent-ils pas aux objectifs de guerre ? Quiconque met le pied sur le sol de l'Allemagne pour travailler devient un auxiliaire de l'armée allemande, quelque ouvrage qu'il fasse.

C'est si vrai que le Gouvernement impérial veut établir le service civil obligatoire ; tous les civils seront par le fait militarisés.

Et avant même que les autorités allemandes aient mis en vigueur cette nouvelle législation de guerre, elles l'appliquent à la Belgique occupée. Elles

l'imposent aux Belges contre leur propre pays, nonobstant les assurances solennelles qui avaient écarté de leurs soucis cette odieuse perspective.

Jamais, Excellence, jamais le droit des gens n'a reconnu aux vainqueurs pareil pouvoir, jamais il ne consacrera pareille iniquité.

Ne nous demandez pas de dire à nos populations que c'est dans leur intérêt qu'on les expédie en Allemagne : le faisant, nous trahirions notre patrie.

Agréez, Excellence, l'expression de notre considération distinguée.

Les Députés et Sénateurs de l'arrondissement de Mons,

À Son Excellence le Général von Bissing, (*Signatures*).
Gouverneur général en Belgique.

Translation

MONS, *November* 27, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—We have taken note of the response of November 9 which Your Excellency was good enough to make to our letter of November 2, which came to us through the Comité provincial de Secours et d'Alimentation de Mons, to which it had been addressed.

Witnesses of the enrolment in our region, we have the conviction that the execution of the decrees relating to unemployment has taken place in flagrant violation of the considerations which you set forth. We can only repeat that the motive of this operation has not been to procure work for the unemployed Belgians to relieve the public charities of the support of men without work. Permit us to submit to you several facts as examples.

At Quaregnon, out of 1000 working men taken to control, 304 were deported. Among these there were 227 employed, including 4 cultivators, 5 master-bakers, 6 bakers, an employer-butcher, a brewer, director of a great brewery, an important merchant, the son of a blacksmith, and a printer.

It should be noted that the number of men called to the control is relatively small in proportion to the total population; but it must not be lost sight of that we are in the centre of the mining region, and that all the miners have been exempted.

This observation applies to all the other communes.

At Dour, out of 137 deported 117 were counted who were employed, among which 9 cultivators, 4 students, and a number of small employers working at home.

At Wasmes, out of 186 deported 130 were employed.

At Frameries, out of 200 deported 187 were employed.

At Hornu, out of 140 deported 87 were employed.

At Pâturages, out of 139 deported 134 were employed.

At Ghlin, out of 155 deported 109 were employed.

At Havré the burgomaster had declared to the recruiting officer that all the men summoned to be enrolled were occupied; he had made an inquiry and asked to be allowed to prove it. No attention was paid to his observation, and out of 450 men called to the control 46 were deported, all employed.

The same proportions were found in all the communes.

Is this the effect of chance? No. The greater part of the time they deliberately chose working men who had employment in Belgium. The recruiting officers appeared to have a marked predilection for the most experienced working men of certain industries—foremen, men from the shops, iron-workers, glass-blowers, shoemakers, adjusters, electricians, cultivators.

Thus, at the forges and rolling mills of Baume at Haine-St.-Pierre, out of 400 workmen who were examined 52 were deported.

In the Gilson factories at La Croyère, 50 workmen were deported out of 225 called.

At the company La Brugeoise et Nicaise et Delcuve, 56 out of 389.

At the limited company of the Rolling Mills of La Croyère, 51 out of 73.

At the factories of the Boulonneries et Fonderie de La Louvière, 25 out of 131.

At the workshops of Bouvy at La Croyère, 25 out of 145.

At the Compagnie Centrale de Construction at Haine-St.-Pierre 37 workmen

and employés who were working were deported, about 10 per cent. of the personnel.

At the workshops Spiltoir, Happez et Meck, at Haine-St.-Paul, 14 workmen were deported, which represents 70 per cent. of the personnel examined and 40 per cent. of the entire personnel.

At the Hauts Fourneaux et Fonderies de La Louvière the deportations reached 70 per cent., which made it impossible for the factory to continue work.

In the Usines Boël at La Louvière, they took away 249 workmen, among them a head clerk, 10 employés, 21 foremen, and 217 workmen. All the employés and workmen of these factories that were deported were working at the time they were examined.

At the glass-works of Jemappes, the only establishment of the kind in our arrondissement, the application of the system had a striking effect.

This factory had resumed work on December 4, 1915; it worked without interruption and more and more until September 1, 1916. It had to shut down till November 10 to repair certain furnaces, intending to enlarge its activity. They took away from it more than half of its best workmen. In order to be precise, we cite the following figures:

Forty per cent. of the blowers;
Sixty per cent. of the boys of the first class who aid the blowers;
Thirty per cent. of the boys of the second class who aid the blowers;
Forty per cent. of the personnel of grinders;
Thirty-five per cent. of the stretchers;
One hundred per cent. of the electricians;
One hundred per cent. of the adjusters; etc. . . .

What perturbation for this industry!

What we have just said of the speeding up of the glass-works of Jemappes applies to almost all of the industries we have spoken of.

We put aside the coal-mines, of which the activity is considered with favour; we wish above all to speak of the workshops, the rolling-mills, the crockeries, the boot factories, the tile factories, etc. . . . None of these industries, big or little, was touched by the blockade, or at least did not suffer any great embarrassment on this account. The time during which they had to shut down was caused by interruption of transport, the insufficience of fuel or of minerals, because of the lack of means of transport, and above all, because of the rigours of the decrees by which part of the tools were seized and which limited the working day to a number of hours very greatly reduced (the boot factories).

The manufacturers did not fail to show the recruiting officers how necessary it was for the success of their work to leave their personnel intact. Their observations were hardly listened to.

One thing that is characteristic, which shows the fixed idea to choose among the professions or categories already determined, was that the military authority grouped on one side the working men in the factories that were going full blast, and made their choice under the eyes of the chiefs of the establishments and despite their protestations: it was the same for the workmen of the rolling-mills of Jemappes, for those of the constructing-shops of Nimy, and the shops of Bouvy at La Louvière.

What complaint can they make of these good fellows who were torn away from their families, who were taken away from national labour to be compelled to work in the interest of Germany?

What wrongs had they committed?

The deportation is a cruel and unmerited suffering for them, and for us Belgians a national calamity.

To all the requisitions of material, of tools, of horses, which had already made such ravages, was it necessary to add that most abominable of all, that of man?

By the development of civilization, by the adoption of codified laws of war in international conventions, it would seem that never more would a vanquished people have been submitted to such a torture and that the personal liberty of peaceful inhabitants would have been respected. All the unemployed as well as the working men must be left in their homes.

And has one ever seen a population more calm, more stoic under suffering? Was the population ever the occasion of difficulties or care for the Imperial Government?

You try to reassure our patriotism, Excellency, in declaring to us that the deported Belgians will not have to take part in anything that has to do with the war. But do not all those who co-operate in any way in the enterprises of belligerent peoples work for war? The farmer who furnishes fats to the army, the tailor who makes clothes, the beltmaker, the shoemaker, the lumberman, the road-builder, do they not participate in work which has a war end? Whoever puts a foot on the soil of Germany to work becomes an auxiliary of the German army, no matter what work he does.

It is so true that the German Government wishes to establish obligatory civil service; all of the civilians will be by that fact militarized.

And even before the authorities have put in vigour this new war legislation they apply it to occupied Belgium. They impose it on Belgians against their own country, notwithstanding the solemn assurances which had relieved their minds of this odious perspective.

Never, Excellency, never has international law recognized such a power in the conqueror. Never has it consecrated such an iniquity.

Do not ask us to say to our populations that it is in their interest that they are being sent to Germany. In doing so we should betray our country.

Accept, Excellency, the expression of our distinguished consideration.

To His Excellency General von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium.

NOTE 4 (see p. 272).

BRUXELLES, *le 9 novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Il semblait qu'aucune douleur ne pût être ajoutée à celles dont nous sommes accablés depuis l'occupation de notre patrie. Nos libertés abolies, notre industrie et notre commerce anéantis, nos matières premières et nos instruments de travail exportés, la fortune publique ruinée, le dénûment succédant à l'aisance des familles naguère les plus prospères, les privations, les anxiétés et les deuils, on avait tout enduré, sans autre révolte que la protestation muette des âmes et sans que nulle part l'ordre public eût été troublé. Un immense mouvement de solidarité avait rapproché toutes les classes sociales; on souffrait en commun et la communauté des souffrances allégeait le poids des misères individuelles.

Mais voici qu'une violence nouvelle vient fondre sur nos familles et les déchire. Des centaines, des milliers de citoyens paisibles, de tout âge, de toute condition, toute une population civile est brusquement, brutalement arrachée à ses foyers et déportée en Allemagne. Où, en quel point de l'Empire? Nul ne le sait. Quelle y sera son existence, à quel travail y sera-t-elle condamnée? Mystère. De ce fait, des centaines, des milliers de femmes, d'enfants, de vieillards sont abandonnés, dépourvus de leur soutien, livrés aux angoisses d'une séparation dont nul ne prévoit le terme, et le spectacle de leur détresse est tel que, pour ne pas avoir à l'affronter, les recruteurs refusent à ces épouses éplorées, à ces parents désespérés la consolation d'un dernier adieu.

Est-il besoin d'insister sur ces scènes dont la région de l'étape est le théâtre depuis plusieurs semaines et qui se déroulent depuis quelques jours dans le territoire du Gouvernement général, où le fléau menace de s'étendre de commune en commune jusqu'à ce que ses victimes se comptent par centaines de mille? Les avis scellés aux murs et reproduits dans les journaux en disent assez long; c'est partout la même procédure, aussi sommaire que lugubre: des arrestations en masse, des hommes classés arbitrairement parmi les sans-travail, parqués, triés, expédiés vers l'inconnu. Pour ne parler que des affiches d'hier placardées à Nivelles, Virginal, Ittre, Haut-Ittre, Lillois, Baulers, Monstreux, Bornival, Thines, Braine-l'Alleud, Ophain, Wauthier-Braine, Waterloo, Plancenoit, elles convoquent indistinctement, en leur recommandant de se munir d'un petit bagage à main, "toutes les personnes du sexe mâle âgées de plus de 17 ans, à

l'exception seulement des ecclésiastiques, médecins, avocats et instituteurs." On ne limite plus la levée aux chômeurs : c'est qu'en effet le prétexte d'occuper nos chômeurs à l'étranger ne trompe plus personne. Le plus sûr moyen de les occuper dans le pays n'aurait-il pas été de leur laisser leurs outils, leurs machines, leurs ateliers, leurs approvisionnements, leurs facilités de communication, leur liberté de travail ? Des philanthropes avaient imaginé d'utiliser les bras disponibles à des travaux d'intérêt public : leur initiative fut enrayée et finalement brisée. D'autres s'étaient ingéniés à organiser à l'intention des chômeurs un vaste système d'enseignement technique destiné à relever leur valeur professionnelle, mais le plan ne fut pas agréé, pas plus que celui de créer partout des bureaux de renseignement et de placement.

On préfère leur procurer de l'ouvrage en Allemagne où les représentants de " l'Industrie-Bureau " leur promettent " un bon salaire " s'ils consentent à s'y faire embaucher " volontairement," et où les attendent, en cas de refus, des salaires de famine. Sur quelle dépression physique et morale ne compte-t-on pas pour leur forcer la main ?

Sans doute il a été affirmé que les entreprises auxquelles on offre de les employer seraient étrangères à la guerre. Mais de toutes parts des voix ont répondu : En prenant la place d'un ouvrier allemand, l'ouvrier belge permet à l'Allemagne d'augmenter la force numérique de ses armées. Le travail le plus odieux est celui dont l'effet se tourne contre la patrie ; servir l'Allemagne, c'est se battre contre notre pays. Y contraindre nos ouvriers n'est autre chose qu'un coup de force, contraire au droit des gens, visé par Votre Excellence dans son arrêté du 15 août 1915, et contraire aussi à l'esprit, sinon au texte de la quatrième Convention de La Haye de 1907.

" Une mesure telle que le déplacement de la population civile non combattante," écrit M. le professeur de droit international Ernest Nys, dans sa lettre de ce jour ci-annexée à M. le Bourgmestre de Bruxelles, " est en contradiction complète avec la notion de l'occupation de guerre ; celle-ci a remplacé l'ancienne théorie de la conquête qui faisait du vainqueur le souverain du pays conquis ; le vainqueur a le devoir de respecter les droits des habitants paisibles."

C'est au nom de ces droits sacrés, ouvertement violés, que les sénateurs et députés soussignés, présents à Bruxelles, mandataires de la Nation belge, adressent à Votre Excellence la solennelle protestation des familles sans nombre atteintes par l'édit cruel qui secoue en ce moment le pays d'un frisson d'indignation qui ne saurait manquer de soulever la réprobation de tout le monde civilisé.

Ils adjurent Votre Excellence d'user vis-à-vis des autorités militaires des hautes prérogatives que lui confère sa charge pour ne pas laisser se consommer un attentat sans précédent dans l'histoire des guerres modernes, et la prient d'agréer l'assurance de leur considération la plus distinguée.

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Liste des Signataires

Ministres d'État :

BARON DE FAVEREAU, président du Sénat ;
COMTE WOESTE, représentant d'Alost ;
JULES VANDERPEEREBOOM, sénateur provincial de la Flandre occidentale ;
JOSEPH DEVOLDER, sénateur pour Arlon-Marche-Bastogne.

Sénateurs :

BRAUN, ALEXANDRE, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
BRUNARD, EDOUARD, sénateur pour Nivelles ;
DE BECKER-REMY, sénateur pour Louvain ;
DE BLIECK, sénateur pour Alost ;
DE RO, GEORGES, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
DUBOST, EDOUARD, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
DUMONT DE CHASSART, sénateur pour Nivelles ;
DUPRET, GEORGES, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
HALLET, MAX, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;

HANREZ, PROSPER, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
BARON E. DE KERCHOVE D'EXAERDE, sénateur pour Alost ;
LEKEU, JULES, sénateur provincial du Hainaut ;
MESENS, EDMOND, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
BARON DE MEVIUS, sénateur pour Namur-Dinant-Philippeville ;
BARON ALFRED ORBAN DE XIVRY, sénateur pour Arlon-Marche-Bastogne ;
POELAERT, ALBERT, sénateur pour Bruxelles ;
VICOMTE SIMONIS, sénateur pour Verviers, ancien président du Sénat ;
SPEYER, HERBERT, sénateur pour Arlon-Marche-Bastogne ;
VINCK, ÉMILE, sénateur provincial du Brabant.

Membres de la Chambre des représentants :

LEVIE, MICHEL, ancien ministre, représentant de Charleroi ;
BERTRAND, LOUIS, représentant de Bruxelles ;
BOEL, POL, représentant de Soignies ;
BUISSET, EMILE, représentant de Charleroi ;
BUYL, représentant d'Ostende-Furnes-Dixmude ;
COCQ, FERNAND, représentant de Bruxelles ;
DE BUE, XAVIER, représentant de Bruxelles ;
DELPORTE, ANTOINE, représentant de Bruxelles ;
BARON DRION, représentant de Charleroi ;
ELBERS, FRANÇOIS, représentant de Bruxelles ;
HANSSENS, EUGÈNE, représentant de Bruxelles ;
BARON ALBERT D'HUART, représentant de Dinant-Philippeville ;
JANSON, PAUL-ÉMILE, représentant de Tournai-Ath ;
JOUREZ, LÉON, représentant de Nivelles ;
LAMBORELLE, représentant de Malines ;
LEMONNIER, MAURICE, représentant de Bruxelles ;
COMTE DE LIMBURG STIRUM, représentant d'Arlon-Marche-Bastogne ;
POLET, HYACINTHE, représentant de Liége ;
PONCELET, JULES, représentant de Neufchâteau-Virton ;
RENS, représentant d'Alost ;
TIBBAUT, ÉMILE, représentant de Termonde ;
WAUTERS, représentant de Huy-Waremme ;
WAUWERMANS, PAUL, représentant de Bruxelles.

Au nom de la Députation permanente du Brabant :

JANSSEN, CHARLES.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 9, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—It seemed that no suffering could be added to those which we have already been bearing since the occupation of our country. Our banished liberty, our destroyed industry and commerce, our raw materials, our instruments of work taken out of the country, the public fortune ruined, privations replacing the wealth of families formerly the most prosperous, grief, anxieties, and mourning, had all been endured without any other sign of revolt than a mute protestation of the spirit, without any disturbance of public order in any part of the country. An enormous impulse of solidarity had brought together all the social classes in a common suffering, and the mutuality of burdens lessened the weight of the individual miseries.

But now comes a new violence to our families, tearing them apart.

Hundreds and thousands of peaceful citizens of all ages, of all conditions, an entire civilian population, is harshly, brutally turned out of its home and deported to Germany. Where, in what part of the Empire? No one knows. What will be their existence? To what work will they be assigned? For these reasons hundreds and thousands of wives, children, and old men are abandoned and deprived of their support, betrayed to the anguishes of a separation of which no one can see the end; and the spectacle of their desolation is such that in order not to witness it the recruiters refuse the suffering wives, the suffering parents, the consolation of a last farewell.

Is there need to repeat the scenes for which the region of the Étape has for several weeks been the theatre, and which have been repeating themselves during the past days in the territory of the Government-General, where this terrible measure promises to extend from commune to commune until its victims are counted by hundreds of thousands? The notices posted on the walls and reproduced in the newspapers tell sufficiently what it is. It is the same procedure everywhere, summary and sorrowful: arrests *en masse*, men classed arbitrarily among the unemployed, grouped together, divided, sent toward the unknown. To mention only the notices of yesterday, posted at Nivelles, Virginal, Ittre, Haut-Ittre, Lillois, Baulers, Monstreux, Bornival, Thines, Braine-l'Alleud, Ophain, Wauthier-Braine, Waterloo, Plancenoit; they summon without distinction all persons of male sex over seventeen years of age, with the exception only of clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and professors, and they are told to bring with them only a small amount of baggage. The levy is no longer limited to unemployed; indeed the pretext to give employment to our unemployed outside of the country no longer deceives us. The best means of giving them occupation in their own country would have been to leave them their tools, their machines, their shops, their supplies, their facilities for communication, their liberty of work. Philanthropists have suggested using workmen on public improvements. Their initiative has been stopped and finally broken. Others have taken steps to organize for the unemployed a vast system of technical education, intended to increase their professional value; but the plan was not approved, any more than that which had envisaged the creation in various places of information offices and employment bureaux.

They prefer to give them work in Germany, where the representatives of the Industrial Bureau promise them "good wages" if they consent to work there "voluntarily," and where they may expect, in case of refusal, famine wages; physical and moral depression are counted on in order to force their hand.

Invariably it has been asserted that the work offered to them is non-military in character; but denials from every side have come in. In taking the place of a German workman the Belgian workman permits Germany to increase the numerical force of its armies. The most odious work is that which is used in effect against the native land. To serve Germany is to fight against their own country. To compel our workmen to do this is nothing less than an act of force contrary to international law, as cited in Your Excellency's proclamation of August 15, 1915, and contrary also to the spirit, if not to the text, of the fourth Convention of The Hague of 1907.

"A measure such as the deportation of non-combatant civil population," writes Ernest Nys, professor of international law, in his letter of even date to the Mayor of Brussels, a copy of which is enclosed herewith, "is in complete contradiction to the idea of military occupation. This idea has replaced the former theory of conquest, which made the conqueror the sovereign of the conquered country. The conqueror must respect the rights of the peaceful inhabitants."

It is in the name of the sacred rights openly violated that the senators and deputies whose signatures follow, now at Brussels, speaking in the name of the Belgian nation, address to Your Excellency the solemn protest of the numberless families affected by the cruel edict which sends through the country at this moment a tremor of indignation, that cannot but arouse the reprobation of the civilized world.

They adjure Your Excellency to employ with the military authorities the high prerogatives granted to you by your position, and not to allow the consummation of an act without precedent in the history of modern wars, and they beg Your Excellency to accept the assurance of their most distinguished consideration.

(*Signatures.*)

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium.

Enclosure to preceding letter

39 RUE ST.-JEAN, BRUXELLES, *le 6 novembre* 1916.

Monsieur l'Échevin LEMONNIER, f.f. de Bourgmestre de Bruxelles.

C'est avec raison que votre collège soutient que, si la quatrième Convention de La Haye de 1907 ne renferme pas de texte précis relativement au déplacement de la population civile non combattante, il résulte cependant de l'esprit de cette Convention que pareille mesure n'est pas légitime.

Semblable mesure est en contradiction complète avec la notion de l'occupation de guerre. Cette notion a remplacé l'ancienne théorie de la conquête, qui faisait du vainqueur le souverain du pays conquis.

Dans les guerres actuelles, la population paisible a des droits ; le vainqueur est l'administrateur provisoire ; il doit respecter les droits des habitants paisibles.

Tout cela a été indiqué fort bien, en 1874, à la Conférence de Bruxelles, notamment par le délégué de l'Empire Allemand, le général de Voigts-Rhetz. Le projet de convention de 1874 n'a pas été ratifié ; mais son texte a servi aux travaux des Conférences de La Haye de 1897 et de 1907, et ces deux conférences s'en sont inspirées et, sur le point qui nous occupe, elles n'ont point varié.

En 1899, à la première Conférence de La Haye, le Président de la Commission pour le Règlement des lois et coutumes de la guerre sur terre, Frédéric de Martens (3e partie, page 92, de l'édition de 1907), parlant des nécessités de la guerre, prononçait ces paroles :

" C'est notre désir unanime que les armées des nations civilisées soient non seulement pourvues des armes les plus perfectionnées mais qu'elles soient également pénétrées des notions du droit, de la justice et de l'humanité, obligatoires même sur le territoire envahi et même à l'égard de l'ennemi."

Ce langage n'est point utopique : il concède suffisamment à la réalité : mais il admet aussi les exigences du cœur et les aspirations de la civilisation moderne.

Tel sera l'avis impartial de tout juriste.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Bourgmestre, l'expression de mes sentiments de haute considération.

E. NYS, *Professeur à l'Université.*

Translation

39 RUE ST.-JEAN, BRUSSELS, *November* 6, 1916.

Mr. Alderman LEMONNIER, Acting Burgomaster of Brussels.

Your College of Aldermen rightfully maintains that if the fourth Convention of The Hague of 1907 does not contain the precise text relative to the deportation of the civil non-combatant population, it is nevertheless to be concluded from the spirit of that convention that such a measure is not legitimate.

Such a measure is in complete contradiction to the idea of military occupation. This idea has replaced the former theory of conquest which made the conqueror the sovereign of the conquered country. In modern warfare the peaceful population has certain rights. The conqueror is the provisory administrator ; he must respect the rights of the peaceful inhabitants.

All this was clearly indicated in 1874 at the Conference of Brussels, notably by the delegate of the German Empire, General von Voigts-Rhetz. The project of a convention of that Conference was not ratified, but its text served for the preparatory work of the Conventions of 1897 and of 1907 ; and these two Conventions drew their inspiration from it, and, on the point that interests us, they made no change in it.

In 1899, at the first Conference of The Hague, the President of the Committee on Rules and Customs of Land Warfare, Frédéric de Martens (Part 3, page 92, edition of 1907), speaking of the exigencies of war, said these words :

" It is our unanimous desire that the armies of civilized nations be not only provided with arms of the greatest perfection, but that they also be actively aware of the principles of law, of justice, and of humanity, obligatory even in occupied territory and as regards the enemy."

These words are not at all Utopian; they take sufficient cognizance of the facts; but they admit also the demands of humanity and the aspirations of modern civilization.

Such will be the impartial statement of any jurist.

I beg you to accept, Mr. Burgomaster, the expression of my highest consideration.

E. NYS, *Professor of the University.*

NOTE 5 (see p. 272).

BRUXELLES, *le* 11 *novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Les soussignés, unis dans une même pensée de solidarité pour la défense du droit, croient de leur devoir de faire connaître à Votre Excellence l'impression douloureuse que fait dans le monde judiciaire tout entier la récente mesure prise contre une partie de la population belge.

Des citoyens paisibles, appartenant à toutes les classes de la société et sur tous les points du pays, sont, au mépris du droit naturel, du droit positif et du droit des gens, arrachés à leurs foyers, à leurs familles et employés, en Allemagne ou ailleurs, à des travaux qui servent, indirectement tout au moins, aux opérations militaires contre la Patrie.

C'est la méconnaissance du grand principe de la liberté individuelle, reconnu par tous les peuples civilisés.

C'est la méconnaissance, aussi, des principes les plus certains du droit de la guerre qui assure aux populations civiles le libre exercice de leurs droits.

C'est la méconnaissance, enfin, des assurances que Votre Excellence donnait à la population belge, quand elle promettait aux citoyens restés dans le pays, sécurité et protection.

Cette mesure nous reporte au temps où le vainqueur emmenait en servitude les populations vaincues et les réduisait en esclavage.

L'homme est maître de sa personne, de ses forces et de sa volonté. Les travaux forcés sont une peine réservée aux grands crimes.

Les soussignés se permettent de le rappeler à Votre Excellence et espèrent qu'elle se fera auprès du Gouvernement Impérial le défenseur de la Belgique confiée à sa viligance et à sa garde.

Ils présentent à Votre Excellence les assurances de leur haute considération.

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique.

[N.B.—Suivent cinq cents signatures environ : Cour et Barreau de Cassation; Cour d'Appel et Barreau de Bruxelles; Tribunal civil et Tribunal de commerce de Bruxelles; Juges de paix et Prud'hommes de Bruxelles.]

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 11, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—The undersigned, united in the same spirit of solidarity for the defence of right, believe it to be their duty to acquaint Your Excellency with the painful impression produced upon the entire judicial world by the recent measure enacted against a portion of the Belgian population.

Peaceful citizens belonging to all classes of society and to all parts of the country are, in disregard of natural law, positive law, and international law, torn from their homes, from their families, and employed in Germany or elsewhere at labour which helps, indirectly at least, military operation against their country.

It is the disavowal of the great principle of individual liberty, recognized by all civilized peoples.

It is also the disavowal of the most fundamental principles of military law, which assure to the civil populations the free exercise of their rights.

Lastly, it is the disavowal of the assurances that Your Excellency gave to the

Belgian population when promising to the citizens remaining in the country security and protection.

This measure takes us back to the time when the conqueror carried into servitude the vanquished populations and reduced them to slavery.

Man is master of his person, of his strength, and of his will. Forced labour is a punishment reserved for great crimes.

The undersigned venture to recall that fact to Your Excellency and to hope that Your Excellency will be, before the Imperial Government, the defender of Belgium, confided to Your Excellency's vigilance and keeping.

They present to Your Excellency the assurance of their high consideration.

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

[Followed by about five hundred signatures—including those of judges and lawyers of the Supreme Court, of the Court of Appeal and of the Bar Association of Brussels; Court of First Instance, Commercial Court of Brussels, Justices of the Peace, and Trade Councillors of Brussels.]

NOTE 6 (see p. 272).

LIÉGE, *le* 14 *novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Nous apprenons que les mesures déjà exécutées dans certaines parties de la Belgique occupée vont s'étendre à la province de Liége: elles soulèvent dans nos populations une profonde et légitime émotion.

Membres de la Chambre des Représentants et Sénateurs de la Province de Liége, nous avons le devoir d'adresser l'expression de ces sentiments au Pouvoir exécutif.

Des milliers d'hommes, victimes d'événements dont ils n'ont point la responsabilité et dont ils subissent en silence et dans la misère l'inflexible rigueur, sont, sans avoir commis de délit et sans jugement, arrachés à leurs foyers, à leurs patrie, condamnés à la déportation et au travail forcé.

Sont-ils coupables d'avoir abandonné les ateliers et les usines où ils travaillaient?

N'est-ce pas la guerre qui, en fermant ces ateliers et ces usines, les y a contraints?

L'industrie métallurgique chôme partiellement faute de moyens de transport.

La mainmise sur les machines et outils, la réquisition des matières premières ont amené la suspension de tout travail dans la plupart des établissements industriels.

Les fabriques d'armes, qui occupent tant de bras dans notre région, sont fermées par ordre de l'autorité allemande.

Ainsi, toute l'activité de ce pays a été arrêtée.

Du jour au lendemain, une masse de nos compatriotes se sont vus réduits à l'inaction, privés de leur gagne-pain, sans autres ressources que leurs maigres économies; la bienveillance de leurs patrons et les secours de la solidarité, merveilleusement épanouie en Belgique par ces temps de douleur.

Certaine presse taxe nos classes laborieuses de paresse. Fallait-il donc ajouter la calomnie à l'iniquité?

Nos voisins de l'Est connaissent cependant la capacité et la vaillance de nos populations ouvrières.

Ils ont pu les apprécier par les relations commerciales et industrielles que nous entretenions depuis des siècles avec les provinces rhénanes. Combien de grands industriels et commerçants d'Allemagne ont eu à se louer de leurs aptitudes et de leur énergie. Sans doute protesteront-ils avec nous contre ceux qui insultent à la misère de nos travailleurs en les traitant de fainéants.

Mais ils auront également constaté leur ombrageuse fierté.

L'ouvrier de nos régions est jaloux de son indépendance et de sa liberté. Il entend disposer de lui, de son intelligence et de ses bras, à sa guise; il prétend être maître de sa vie et de ses actes.

Le pouvoir occupant lui a offert du travail, il le lui a offert à un salaire élevé. La plupart de nos ouvriers ont repoussé ces offres. Ils ont jugé que les accepter, c'était servir les intérêts de l'envahisseur au détriment de leur pays.

Et qui oserait le contester ? Prendre la place d'un ouvrier allemand, n'est-ce pas lui permettre d'aller combattre nos fils et nos frères ?

Par patriotisme, nos ouvriers se sont imposé de dures privations. Votre Excellence ne les en blâmera pas.

Leur esprit d'indépendance s'est néanmoins soumis aux nécessités de la guerre.

Notre province fut occupée dès les premiers jours des opérations. Elle a subi son sort courageusement, non sans espérance, mais sans révolte et sans bruit.

L'ordre n'a pas été troublé.

Qu'est-ce donc qui motive la déportation et le travail forcé dont nos concitoyens sont aujourd'hui menacés ?

Le droit des gens condamne de pareilles mesures. Pas un auteur moderne ne les justifie. Les textes de la Convention de La Haye, en limitant les réquisitions au profit de l'armée occupante, les interdisent. Il ne s'agit, en effet, dans l'occurrence ni de prestations ni de services requis pour les besoins de l'armée d'occupation.

A la Conférence de Bruxelles de 1874, Monsieur le Général Voigt-Rhetz, délégué de l'Empire d'Allemagne, les a implicitement réprouvés, notamment en prononçant ces paroles : " Ce qu'on ne peut réclamer des populations occupées ce sont des services que réprouverait l'article 45 comme contraires au patriotisme et à l'honneur."

D'autre part, les termes des articles 5 et 6 de la Convention fixant les conditions d'internement et de travail, s'appliquent restrictivement aux prisonniers de guerre et excluent conséquemment la possibilité de tout traitement analogue aux populations civiles.

Les Constitutions de tous les États de l'Europe proclament comme des dogmes la liberté individuelle et le droit pour tout citoyen de disposer de ses facultés et de son travail comme il l'entend.

Au pays de Liége, ces principes sont depuis de longs siècles synthétisés, et fièrement gravés dans le cœur des hommes sous la forme hautaine d'un vieil adage de droit, toujours vivant, toujours sacré : " Pauvre homme en sa maison Roy est."

Partout ils sont honorés comme un des fondements de notre monde moderne.

L'occupant ne peut abolir ces droits qui sont le patrimoine de l'humanité.

L'autorité militaire, par avis du 18 décembre 1914, émanant du commandant de place de Liége, a garanti à la garde-civique " qu'il n'était pas question de l'envoyer, ni maintenant ni dans l'avenir, en Allemagne."

Un avis de Votre Excellence elle-même, du 22 octobre 1915, donne la même assurance.

Les différents commandants de place qui se sont succédé à Liége ont affirmé par diverses affiches que " le contrôle avait uniquement pour but de constater la présence des personnes qui y sont soumises."

Serait-ce possible que des engagements aussi formels ne fussent pas remplis ?

Déporter des Belges en Allemagne, les y contraindre au travail, c'est, nous l'avons dit, permettre aux ouvriers allemands qu'ils remplacent d'aller au front combattre les fils et les frères de ceux dont on s'empare par la force ; c'est leur imposer une évidente coopération à la guerre contre leur patrie ; c'est méconnaître le Règlement de La Haye, la pensée généreuse dont il est animé et le texte même de son article 52 ; c'est anéantir les conquêtes progressives de l'humanité que consacre cette convention longuement élaborée, et nous reporter aux plus sombres coutumes d'un lointain passé.

Car cette déportation et ce travail forcé ressemblent à s'y méprendre à l'esclavage auquel dans l'antiquité les peuples vainqueurs astreignaient les vaincus.

Nous avons cru de notre devoir d'exposer à Votre Excellence ces considéra-

tions et les plaintes de nos populations affligées, nous espérons encore que la voix du droit sera entendue.

Veuillez agréer, Excellence, l'expression de notre considération la plus distinguée.

Les mandataires de la Province de Liége :

Les Députés:	Les Sénateurs:
EUGÈNE MULLENDORFF,	A. MAGIS,
DE LIEDEKERKE,	ED. PELTZER DE CLERMONT,
H. POLET,	VAN ZUYLEN,
MARQUIS IMPERIALI,	H. COLLEAUX,
J. DAUVISTER,	J. KEPPENNE,
S. DONNAY,	CH. MAGNETTE,
SCHINLER,	L. NAVEAU,
PIRARD,	A. FLECHET.
PAUL VAN HOEGAERDEN,	
NICOLAS GOBLET,	
J. DALLEMAGNE,	
F. GALOPIN,	
DEJARDIN,	
LÉON TROCLET,	
XAVIER NEUJEAN.	

À Son Excellence le General von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

LIÉGE, *November* 14, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—We learn that the measures already carried out in certain parts of occupied Belgium are about to be applied to the province of Liége. They cause in our population a profound and legitimate emotion.

As members of the Chambre of Députés and of the Senate of the Province of Liége, we are bound to address to the executive powers the expression of these feelings.

Thousands of men, victims of events for which they are not in any way responsible and the unyielding rigour of which they undergo in silence and in misery, are condemned, without judgment and without having committed any crime, to deportation and to forced labour.

Are they to blame for having left the factories and the workshops where they were employed ?

Is it not the war which, by closing these workshops and factories, has forced them to such a step ?

The metallurgical industry has ceased partially through the lack of means of transportation.

The seizures of the machines and of the tools, the requisitioning of raw materials, have brought to a stop all work in the greater part of the industrial establishments.

The arms factories which gave work to so many men in our district are closed by the order of the German authorities.

Thus the entire activity of the country has been stopped.

In a day a mass of our compatriots have seen themselves reduced to inaction, deprived of their means of subsistence, bereft of other resources than their meagre savings, the kindness of their employers, and the co-operative aid that has so wonderfully spread throughout Belgium in these unhappy times.

Certain journals accuse our working class of laziness. Was it necessary, then, to add calumny to iniquity ?

Our neighbours to the east know, however, the ability and the bravery of our working population.

They have been able to estimate them by the commercial and industrial

relations that we have maintained for centuries with the Rhine provinces. How many great German men of industry and commerce have been obliged to praise their skill and their energy. Perhaps they will protest with us against those who insult the misery of our workmen and call them ne'er-do-wells.

But they have also witnessed their fierce pride.

The workman of our regions is jealous of his independence and of his liberty. He means to do with himself, his intelligence, and his labour as he pleases. He claims to be master of his life and of his deeds.

The occupying Power offered him work, and at a high wage. Most of our workers rejected these offers. They judged that to accept them would be to serve the interests of the invader to the detriment of their country.

And who would venture to deny it? To take the place of a German workman permits him to go and fight our sons and brothers, does it not?

Our workmen have accepted severe privations from patriotic motives. Your Excellency will not blame them for it. Their spirit of independence has nevertheless bowed to the necessities of war.

Our province was occupied during the first days of the operations. It underwent its fate with courage, not without hope, but without revolt or commotion. Public order has not been troubled.

What, then, is the cause of the deportation and the forced labour with which our fellow-citizens are to-day threatened?

International law condemns such measures. Not a single modern author justifies them. The text of the Convention of The Hague, in limiting the requisitions for the benefit of the occupying army, prohibits such measures. As a matter of fact, in the present case it is no question of requisitioning or of services required for the needs of the occupying forces.

At the Conference of Brussels of 1874 General von Voigts-Rhetz, delegate of the German Empire, explicitly disapproved of such measures, notably in the following words: "What cannot be demanded of occupied peoples are services which Article 48 would condemn as contrary to patriotism and to honour."

On the other hand, the terms of Articles 5 and 6 of the convention treating of the conditions of internment and of work apply only to prisoners of war, and consequently exclude the possibility of any such treatment of civil populations.

The constitutions of all the States of Europe exalt as dogmas individual liberty and the right of each person to dispose of his faculties and his labours as seems best to him.

In the country of Liége these principles have been firmly implanted for many centuries and have been proudly inscribed in the hearts of men in the lofty form of an old legal adage, which still lives and is sacred: "A poor man is king in his own home."

They are honoured everywhere as one of the foundation-stones of our modern world.

The occupant cannot abolish these rights, which form the inheritance of humanity.

The military authorities, by an announcement of the Commander of Liége, December 18, 1914, guaranteed to the Garde Civique that "there was no question of sending them to Germany either at the present time or in the future."

Your Excellency's own announcement of October 22, 1915, gives the same assurance.

The several commanders who have held the power at Liége have by various notices confirmed that "the control service was solely to prove the presence of the persons to whom it applied."

Would it be possible that such formal undertakings should not have been observed?

To deport Belgians to Germany and to compel them there to perform forced labour is, as we have said, to permit German workmen whom they replace to go to the front to fight the sons and brothers of those whom you take away by force. Such a measure forces them to take an obvious part in the war against their country; it violates The Hague Convention, the generous thought with

which it is animated, and the very text of its Article 52, it destroys the progressive victories of humanity consecrated by that carefully elaborated Convention, and it takes us back to the darkest practices of a far-away past.

For this deportation and this forced labour resembles slavery to that degree where they cannot be distinguished—the slavery to which in olden times the conqueror reduced the conquered.

We feel that it is our duty to bring these considerations and complaints of our afflicted people to the attention of Your Excellency. We still hope that the voice of law will be heard.

We beg Your Excellency to accept the expression of our most distinguished consideration.

For the population of the Province of Liége :

Deputies : (*Fifteen Signatures*). Senators : (*Eight Signatures*).

To His Excellency General von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

NOTE 7 (see p. 272).

LES DÉPORTATIONS BELGES

PROTESTATION DU COLLÈGE ÉCHEVINAL DE BRUXELLES

VILLE DE BRUXELLES,
No. U 7838.

BRUXELLES, *le 17 novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—Un avis de M. le Gouverneur allemand, lieutenant général Hurt, aux Bourgmestres du Grand Bruxelles et du Brabant, publié aujourd'hui, annonce que l'autorité allemande a décidé la déportation en Allemagne des ouvriers chômeurs.

Cet avis cause une profonde émotion parmi nos concitoyens.

Le sentiment public considère cette déportation comme l'établissement en Belgique d'un régime d'esclavage.

Vous comprendrez sans peine à quel point semblable mesure, qui plonge dans la douleur tant de familles, porte atteinte à cet amour de la liberté individuelle, à ce profond sentiment de dignité qui font, depuis des siècles, l'orgueil et la grandeur morale du Peuple belge tout entier.

Notre population s'est toujours distinguée par le culte de la justice et du droit.

En matière politique, comme en matière internationale, elle a toujours compté que le droit demeurerait sa sauvegarde.

L'article 43 de la Convention de La Haye porte que l'occupant respectera, sauf empêchement absolu, les lois en vigueur dans le pays occupé.

Parmi les lois en vigueur en Belgique, il n'en est point de plus précieuse et de plus sacrée que celle qui garantit à tout citoyen belge sa liberté personnelle, se manifestant, notamment, dans le domaine du travail.

Rien ne nous paraît justifier, en ce moment, une atteinte à cette loi.

Le Pouvoir occupant fait observer que l'inaction à laquelle sont réduits un grand nombre de travailleurs est regrettable.

Qui le sait mieux que nous ?

Qui le sait mieux que notre vaillante population ouvrière, laquelle de tout temps, s'est honorée par l'ardeur et l'opiniâtreté de son labeur ?

Nos ouvriers ne demandent qu'à se livrer à leurs occupations accoutumées.

Sont-ils responsables du chômage qui leur est imposé ?

Est-ce leur faute si les matières premières, si les machines ont été réquisitionnées, s'il n'y a presque plus de chevaux, si les transports sont entravés, si 800,000 mètres de rails des chemins de fer vicinaux ont été enlevés ?

Invoquera-t-on des charges de la bienfaisance publique ?

Elles sont lourdes, évidemment, mais elles ne grèvent en rien le Pouvoir occupant, qui n'a pas dû intervenir pour soulager la misère générale.

C'est le Comité National de Secours et d'Alimentation et l'initiative privée qui aident nos chômeurs involontaires et qui sont décidés à poursuivre leur œuvre de solidarité.

Puisque la population belge ne s'attend pas à être secourue par l'occupant, n'est-il pas légitime de la laisser libre d'apprécier dans quelles conditions il lui est permis et possible de se livrer au travail ?

On ne peut qu'éprouver le plus profond respect pour un refus de travail qu'inspirent uniquement un noble patriotisme et spécialement la volonté de ne pas fournir directement ou indirectement une aide à l'ennemi.

Il est certain que le travail que l'on veut imposer à nos compatriotes a pour but exclusivement de fortifier l'Allemagne économiquement et même militairement. Cette circonstance fait apparaître plus nettement encore le caractère d'esclavage et de servitude que présente la mesure dont sont menacés nos concitoyens.

Notre population n'a pas cessé de supporter avec calme, avec résignation, avec dignité, les cruelles épreuves de la guerre actuelle.

Cette disposition d'esprit ne pouvait qu'être affermie par les déclarations de l'Autorité allemande au début même des hostilités.

M. le Gouverneur général, Baron von der Goltz, disait dans sa proclamation du 2 septembre 1914 :

" Les citoyens Belges désirant vaquer paisiblement à leurs occupations n'ont rien à craindre de la part des troupes ou des autorités allemandes. Autant que faire se pourra, le commerce devra être repris, les usines devront recommencer à travailler, les moissons être rentrées.

" Citoyens Belges,

" Je ne demande à personne de renier ses sentiments patriotiques, mais j'attends de vous tous une soumission raisonnable et une obéissance absolue vis-à-vis du Gouvernement général.

" Je vous invite à lui montrer de la confiance et à lui prêter votre concours. J'adresse cette invitation spécialement aux fonctionnaires de l'État, des Communes, qui sont restés à leur poste. Plus vous donnerez suite à cet appel, plus vous servirez votre Patrie."

Dans toutes les églises du pays, sur l'invitation du Cardinal Mercier, il a été annoncé au mois d'octobre 1914, que M. le Gouverneur d'Anvers, Général Huene, avait autorisé le Cardinal Mercier à faire, en son nom et à communiquer à la population, la déclaration suivante, avec l'approbation du Gouverneur général, Baron von der Goltz :

" Les jeunes gens n'ont point à craindre d'être emmenés en Allemagne, soit pour y être employés dans l'armée, soit pour y être employés à des travaux forcés."

Est-il besoin de rappeler encore le texte des avis suivants, placardés sur les murs de Bruxelles ?

" Quiconque ayant fait partie de la Garde Civique, rentré de l'étranger à Bruxelles et agglomération, ne sera pas traité comme prisonnier de guerre, *mais pourra y résider en toute liberté* s'il souscrit à l'obligation de ne plus prendre les armes contre l'Allemagne pendant cette guerre ni d'entreprendre aucun acte hostile à la cause allemande.

" Le Gouverneur,
" VON KRAEWEL, *Général-Major.*

" BRUXELLES, *le* 19 *février* 1915."

" En vertu de l'ordre du Gouvernement général en Belgique du 13 et 19 février 1915, il est ordonné par la présente que tous *les sujets mâles de nationalité belge*, nés de 1892 à 1897 inclus et domiciliés à : Bruxelles, Anderlecht, Auderghem, Etterbeek, Forest, Ixelles, Jette-Saint-Pierre, Koekelberg, Laeken, Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, Schaerbeek, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Saint-Gilles, Uccle, Watermael-Boitsfort et Woluwe-Saint-Lambert, soient mis sous le contrôle par le bureau de déclaration Deutsches Meldeamt Gross-Brüssel, rue du Méridien, 10, et auquel

les communes nommées ci-haut ont communiqué tous les noms des sujets mâles nés de 1892 à 1897. . . .

" *Il est expressément entendu que le Gouvernement allemand ne projette ni d'incorporer des sujets belges dans l'armée allemande, ni de les emmener en Allemagne comme prisonniers* pendant la durée de la guerre.

" Le Gouverneur,
" VON KRAEWEL, *Général-Major.*"

" BRUXELLES, *le* 17 *mars* 1915.

" À partir du 1er novembre prochain, le contrôle exercé jusqu'à présent sur les Belges nés de 1892 à 1897 sera applicable également à tous les hommes belges nés de 1885 à 1898 (y compris ces deux années).

" Les soldats (pas les officiers) de l'ancienne Garde Civique non active seront libérés du contrôle s'ils sont âgés de trente ans accomplis.

" *Je répète que le contrôle n'a d'autre but que de permettre de constater la présence des personnes inscrites et de les empêcher de quitter le pays.*

" *On n'a donc nullement l'intention de les incorporer* dans l'armée allemande, *ni de les interner comme prisonniers de guerre.*

" Le Gouverneur général de Belgique,
" Freiherr VON BISSING, *Generaloberst.*

" BRUXELLES, *le* 22 *octobre* 1915."

Enfin le règlement concernant les citoyens Belges soumis au contrôle nés de 1885 à 1898 (*Vorschriften für Meldepflichtige Männliche Belgier, Geburtsjahr* 1885–1898) dont un exemplaire a été remis par l'autorité allemande à tous les citoyens Belges au moment de leur inscription au contrôle allemand (Meldeamt) et qui forme pour eux contrat, porte :

" Il est bien entendu que le Gouvernement allemand n'a nullement l'intention d'incorporer des Belges dans l'armée allemande, ni de les interner en Allemagne pendant la durée de la guerre (paragraphe 6, page 13). . . .

" Le présent règlement est applicable aux Belges soumis au contrôle et habitant les communes suivantes : Bruxelles, Anderlecht, Auderghem, etc. (comme ci-dessus, paragraphe 10)."

Peut-on concevoir engagement plus précis, plus net ?

" Ils ne seront ni incorporés dans l'armée allemande, *ni internés en Allemagne pendant la durée de la guerre.* . . ."

Ces engagements formels ont déterminé un grand nombre de nos concitoyens, qui s'étaient réfugiés à l'étranger, à rentrer dans leur patrie.

Nous ne pouvions supposer que des promesses aussi solennelles pourraient être méconnues.

Nous devions croire que le pouvoir occupant maintiendrait les principes du droit international et respecterait les sentiments d'honneur et de patriotisme du peuple belge.

Quelles que soient les nécessités de la guerre, il nous semble impossible que l'Autorité occupante puisse persévérer dans la voie où elle est entrée et accomplir ainsi un acte qui doit soulever l'émotion du monde civilisé tout entier.

Nous vous prions d'agréer, Excellence, l'assurance de notre parfaite considération.

Pour le Collège,
Le Secrétaire,
MAURICE VAUTHIER.

Le Collège,
MAURICE LEMONNIER,
LOUIS STEENS,
ÉMILE JACQMAIN,
MAX HALLET,
JEAN PLADET.

À Son Excellence le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

VILLE DE BRUXELLES,
No. U 7838.

BRUSSELS, *November* 17, 1916.

EXCELLENCY,—A notice of the German Governor, Lieutenant-General Hurt, to the mayors of Greater Brussels and of Brabant, published to-day, announces that the German authorities have decided to deport to Germany the workmen without employment.

This notice produces a profound emotion among our fellow-workmen.

Public sentiment considers this deportation to be the establishment in Belgium of a state of slavery.

You will understand without difficulty to what point such a measure, which plunges so many families into sorrow, infringes the right of personal liberty, the profound feelings of personal dignity that have been for centuries the pride and the moral greatness of the entire Belgian people.

Our population has always been distinguished for its observance of justice and of law.

In political as well as in international affairs it has ever considered that law would always remain its safeguard.

Article 43 of the Convention of The Hague states that the occupying Power shall respect, except in case of absolute necessity, the laws in force in the occupied territory. Among the laws in force in Belgium there is no one more precious or more sacred than that which guarantees to each Belgian citizen his personal liberty, which is manifested notably in the domain of labour.

There does not appear to us at this moment any fact to justify the infraction of that law.

The occupying Power calls attention to the regrettable unemployment to which a large number of our workmen are reduced.

Who knows it better than we do?

Who knows it better than our courageous working population, which had at all times been honoured by its devotion to and its love for labour?

Our workmen ask nothing better than to continue their habitual occupations.

Are they to blame for the unemployment that has been imposed upon them?

Is it their fault if the raw materials and the machines have been requisitioned, if there are practically no horses remaining, if communication is limited, if eight hundred thousand metres of rails of interurban railways have been removed?

Is reference made to the charge of public charity?

It is heavy, no doubt, but it falls in no way to the charge of the occupying Power, which has never been called upon to intervene to relieve the general suffering.

It is the Comité National de Secours et d'Alimentation and private initiative that help our involuntarily unemployed and they are ready to continue their work of co-operation.

Since the Belgian population does not expect to be assisted by the occupying Power, is it not legitimate to leave to the population to decide under what conditions it is permissible and possible for it to take up work?

One can but feel the most profound respect for those who refuse to work on the sole ground of a noble patriotism, and particularly for those who will not furnish, directly or indirectly, assistance to the enemy.

It is certain that the work which it is desired to force upon our countrymen has for its sole object the strengthening of Germany economically, and even militarily. This brings still more clearly to the foreground the character of the slavery and of the servitude that is presented by the measure which threatens so many of our fellow-citizens.

Our population has not ceased to endure calmly and with resignation and dignity the cruel tests of the war.

This attitude of mind could only be strengthened by the declarations of the German authorities at the very beginning of the war.

The Governor-General, Baron von der Goltz, said in his proclamation of September 2, 1914:

"Belgian citizens desiring to return peacefully to their occupations have nothing to fear from the German troops or authority. What can be done will be done. Commerce must be resumed, the factories must begin to work again, the harvest must be gathered.

"Belgian citizens, I do not ask any one to renounce his patriotic feelings, but I expect from you absolute obedience and sensible submission as regards the General Government. I invite you to show your confidence in it and to offer it your support. I address this invitation particularly to the officers of the Government, of the communes, who have stayed at their posts. The more you heed this appeal the more will you serve your country."

In all the churches of the country, at the invitation of Cardinal Mercier, it was announced during the month of October 1914 that the Military Governor of Antwerp, General von Huene, had authorized the Cardinal to make in his name, to be communicated to the population, the following declaration, with the approval of Governor-General the Baron von der Goltz:

"Young men need not fear being taken into Germany either to be incorporated there into the army or to be employed at forced labour."

Is there need to recall again the text of the following notices posted on the walls of Brussels:

"Whoever was in the Garde Civique and has returned from abroad to Greater Brussels will not be treated as a prisoner of war, but can remain there in complete liberty if he signs the undertaking not to take up arms against Germany during this war and not to undertake any act hostile to the German cause.

"Governor,

"VON KRAEWEL, *Major-General.*

"BRUSSELS, *February* 19, 1915."

"By virtue of the order of the General Government in Belgium of February 13 and 19, 1915, it is decreed hereby that *all male subjects of Belgian nationality* born between 1892 and 1897, inclusive, and domiciled at Brussels, Anderlecht, Auderghem, Etterbeek, Forest, Schaerbeek, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Ixelles, Jette-Saint-Pierre, Koekelberg, Laeken, Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, Saint-Gilles, Uccle, Watermael-Boitsfort, and Woluwe-Saint-Lambert, are placed under control service by the registry office, Deutsches Meldeamt Gross-Brüssel, rue du Méridien, 10, to which all communes mentioned above have communicated all the names of male subjects born from 1892 to 1897. . . .

"*It is expressly understood that the German Government does not have in mind the incorporation of Belgian subjects in the German army, or their deportation to Germany as prisoners during the war.*

"Governor,

"VON KRAEWEL, *Major-General.*

"BRUSSELS, *March* 17, 1915."

"From November 1st next the service of control in operation until the present time regarding Belgians born between 1892 and 1897 will be applied likewise to all Belgian men born between 1885 and 1898, inclusive.

"Soldiers, not officers, of the former Garde Civique not in active service will be freed from the control if they are more than thirty full years of age.

"*I repeat that the control does not have any other object than to permit the confirmation of the presence of persons registered and to prevent them from leaving the country.*

"*There is therefore no intention whatsoever of incorporating them in the German army or of interning them as prisoners of war.*

"The Governor-General in Belgium,

"Freiherr VON BISSING, *Major-General.*

"BRUSSELS, *October* 22, 1915."

Lastly, the regulation concerning the Belgian subjects submitted to the control, born between 1885 and 1898 (*Vorschriften für Meldepflichtige Männliche Belgier, Geburtsjahr* 1885–1898), a copy of which was transmitted to each Belgian subject at the time of his registry at the German control office (Meldeamt) and which serves as a form of contract for them, reads:

"It is thoroughly understood that the German Government has in no wise the intention of incorporating Belgians in the German army, *nor to intern them in Germany during the course of the war* (paragraph 6, p. 13)."

Can one conceive a more precise undertaking, one more exact?

They "will not be incorporated in the German army nor be interned in Germany during the course of the war." These formal undertakings determined a large number of our fellow-citizens who had taken refuge abroad to return to their country.

We could not believe that such solemn promises could be broken.

We were obliged to believe that the occupying Power would maintain the principles of international law and would respect the feelings and the honour and the patriotism of the Belgian people.

Whatever may be the necessities of the war, it seems to us impossible that the occupying Power can continue in the manner in which it has begun and carry out an act that is bound to excite the emotion of the entire civilized world.

We beg you, Excellency, to accept the assurances, etc.

SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL. THE COUNCIL OF ALDERMEN.

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

NOTE 8 (see p. 272).

CHARLEROI, *le* 18 *novembre* 1916.

EXCELLENCE,—C'est la clameur désespérée de toute une population que nous nous permettons de faire entendre.

La Belgique a subi avec courage toutes les épreuves que le fléau de la guerre lui a imposées depuis le début des hostilités. Atteinte au cœur dans la personne d'un grand nombre de ses habitants, frappée de terreur à la vue de leurs demeures réduites en cendres, notre nation vinculée a supporté courageusement son sort. Après ces jours d'épouvante, le peuple, confiant dans la parole du haut mandataire placé par le Gouvernement Impérial à la tête du pays, s'est efforcé de soutenir sa détresse par un esprit de solidarité qui ne s'est pas un seul instant démenti.

Dès la première heure, des Comités de Secours furent créés, et, tant du côté des pouvoirs publics que des particuliers, tous rivalisèrent de dévouement et d'abnégation pour alléger les souffrances des classes nécessiteuses.

Alors que renaissaient peu à peu le fonctionnement de la Justice et de l'Administration publique, ainsi que les entreprises industrielles et commerciales susceptibles de revivre après de tels déchirements, le peuple belge, groupé sous l'égide de ses institutions communales, s'est ressaisi dans le travail.

Malheureusement, les ruines accumulées, la rareté des matières premières, le défaut des moyens de transport, et l'absence de buts commerciaux, rendirent de plus en plus difficile la restauration de l'activité du pays.

Plus tard, la disparition progressive des instruments de travail, la déchéance physique produite par une alimentation rare et dispendieuse, achevèrent d'epuiser les dernières énergies.

Et c'est ce moment, que les autorités militaires allemandes choisissent, sous prétexte de chômage, pour arracher les plus pauvres et les plus dignes de compassion d'entre nos compatriotes, à l'affection de leurs mères, de leurs épouses et de leurs enfants.

Votre Excellence ne peut rester insensible à notre cri de désespoir, qui doit être pour la Civilisation un cri d'alarme et un appel à sa générosité.

De grandes voix nationales ont déjà protesté avec émotion et autorité contre ce traitement inhumain imposé sans pitié à notre peuple.

Le motif invoqué constitue à l'adresse de notre classe ouvrière une accusation

injuste et blessante de paresse et de fainéantise, contre laquelle nous protestons. Ces malheureux seraient donc placés hors du droit des gens et voués à l'ignominie du travail forcé. Ce châtiment immérité, infligé à nos compatriotes, révolte la conscience humaine, et nous y puisons la force et l'autorité pour prier Votre Excellence d'intervenir auprès du Gouvernement Impérial afin d'obtenir le retrait de ces dispositions implacables et injustifiées.

Daignez agréer, Excellence, avec l'assurance de notre considération la plus distinguée, l'expression du plus vif espoir dans le mandat de haute protection que vous avez assumé vis-à-vis de la Belgique.

LE CONSEIL COMMUNAL DE CHARLEROI,
(Quinze signatures).

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Colonel général Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général allemand en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

CHARLEROI, *November* 18, 1918.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—We venture to bring to your ears the cries of desperation of an entire population.

Belgium has undergone courageously all the sufferings that the curse of war has brought to her since the beginning of hostilities.

A large number of the inhabitants have personally suffered the loss of those near and dear, they have been struck with terror at the sight of their homes reduced to ashes; nevertheless our nation in chains has bravely fought its fate. After the days of fright, the people, confident in the word of the high official placed by the Imperial Government at the head of the country, have been able to endure their misery through a spirit of solidarity that has not failed them for a single instant.

Committees of assistance were formed immediately, and both the public authorities and private individuals strove to outdo each other in devotion and abnegation to assuage the sufferings of the indigent classes.

As the administration of justice and public work, as well as the commercial and industrial enterprises capable of continuing their activity after such a crisis gradually began to function again, the Belgian people, grouped under the ægis of their communal institutions, again began to labour.

Unhappily, the accumulated ruins, the scarcity of raw materials, the lack of means of transport, the absence of commercial objective points, rendered more and more difficult the restoration of the country's activity.

Later, the progressive disappearance of the instruments of labour, the physical weakening produced by insufficient and expensive nourishment, sufficed to exhaust the last bit of energy.

And it is this moment that the German military authorities choose, on the pretext of unemployment, to tear the poorest and most to be pitied of our fellow-citizens from the love of their mothers, their wives, and their children.

Your Excellency cannot remain insensible to our cry of desperation, which must be for civilization a cry of alarm, and an appeal to your generosity.

Important national voices have already protested with emotion and authority against this inhuman treatment that has been applied to our people without pity.

The motive that has been invoked constitutes an unjust and injurious accusation addressed to our working class, and we protest against it. These unhappy men would therefore be placed beyond the pale of international law and condemned to the ignominy of forced labour. This unmerited punishment inflicted on our fellow-citizens revolts the human conscience, and on this ground we found our strength and authority to ask Your Excellency to intervene with the Imperial Government to obtain the withdrawal of these pitiless and unjustifiable measures.

Pray accept, Your Excellency, together with the assurances of our most

distinguished consideration, the expression of the most fervent hope in the mandate of high protection that you have assumed in regard to Belgium.

COMMUNAL COUNCIL OF CHARLEROI,
(*Fifteen signatures*).

To His Excellency Colonel-General the Baron von Bissing,
German Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

ANVERS, *le 7 novembre* 1918.

EXCELLENCE,—En vertu d'une ordonnance du Gouverneur militaire d'Anvers, rendue d'après les instructions du Gouvernement général en Belgique et datée du 2 novembre 1916, nos concitoyens sans travail se trouvant sur les listes du Meldeamt, sont appelés en ce moment à se présenter à la gare du Sud. De là, ils seront transportés, de force s'il le faut, en Allemagne, pour y être contraints à se livrer aux travaux qui leur seront assignés.

Les mêmes mesures sont prises dans le reste du pays.

Sans jugement, sans avoir commis de délit, des milliers de citoyens libres sont ainsi déportés contre leur volonté en terre ennemie, loin de leur foyer, loin de leur femme et de leurs enfants, pour y subir le traitement le plus dur pour un homme libre: la contrainte au travail.

Députés, Sénateurs, notables d'Anvers et son agglomération, nous croirions manquer à tous nos devoirs si de pareils faits pouvaient se passer sous nos yeux, sans que nous usions du droit que nous avons de nous adresser en toutes circonstances au pouvoir exécutif pour faire valoir nos griefs, nos réserves ou nos protestations.

De quel droit le travail forcé, avec déportation, est-il introduit dans notre malheureux pays ?

Telle est la question à laquelle nous cherchons en vain une réponse.

Le droit des gens condamne une pareille mesure.

Il n'est pas un auteur moderne qui la justifie. Les textes de la Convention de La Haye, limitant les réquisitions au profit de l'armée d'occupation, y sont directement contraires.

Le droit constitutionnel de tous les pays européens, y compris celui de l'Allemagne, ne leur est pas moins opposé. Le plus illustre de vos souverains, Frédéric II, a honoré comme un dogme la liberté individuelle et le droit de tout citoyen de disposer de ses facultés et de son travail comme il l'entend. L'occupant doit respecter ces principes essentiels, qui depuis des siècles sont devenus le patrimoine commun de l'humanité.

On ne saurait contester que les forces ouvrières belges, déportées en vertu des mesures dont il s'agit, dégagent à due proportion des ouvriers allemands, en les rendant libres d'aller combattre les frères et les fils des ouvriers dont on s'empare par la force. C'est là une coopération évidente à la guerre contre notre pays, ce que l'article 52 de la Convention de La Haye défend en propres termes.

Ce n'est pas tout.

Au lendemain de l'occupation d'Anvers, des centaines, des milliers de nos concitoyens avaient quitté leur pays et s'étaient réfugiés en Hollande, dans la région située le long de la frontière.

Les déclarations les plus rassurantes leur ont été faites par les autorités allemandes.

Le 9 octobre, le Général von Besseler, commandant en chef l'armée assiégeante, soumettait aux négociateurs envoyés à Contich une déclaration portant : " Les Gardes Civiques désarmés ne seront pas considérés comme prisonniers de guerre."

Sous la même date, le Lieutenant général von Schultz, appelé au commandement de la position fortifiée d'Anvers, faisait proclamer ce qui suit :

" Le soussigné, commandant de la position fortifiée d'Anvers, déclare que rien ne s'oppose au retour des habitants dans leurs foyers.

" *Aucun d'eux ne sera molesté.*

" Les membres de la Garde Civique, s'ils sont désarmés, peuvent rentrer en toute sécurité."

Le 16 octobre 1914, le Cardinal Mercier faisait communiquer à la population une déclaration signée par le Général von Huene, Gouverneur militaire d'Anvers, dans laquelle celui-ci disait *in terminis*, en vue de la publication :

" Les jeunes gens n'ont point à craindre d'être emmenés en Allemagne, soit pour être enrôlés dans l'armée, *soit pour y être employés à des travaux forcés.*"

Peu de temps après, l'éminent prélat de Belgique demanda au Baron von der Goltz, Gouverneur général en Belgique, de ratifier pour la généralité du pays, sans limite de temps, les garanties que le Général von Huene lui avait données pour la province d'Anvers.

Il obtint satisfaction.

Enfin, le 18 octobre 1914, l'autorité militaire d'Anvers a remis, sous sa signature, aux délégués du Général van Terwisga, commandant de l'armée hollandaise de campagne, une déclaration confirmant non seulement que les jeunes gens et les Gardes Civiques désarmés pouvaient rentrer en Belgique et " ne seraient pas inquiétés," mais ajoutant, en outre, " Le bruit selon lequel les jeunes gens belges seraient conduits en Allemagne . . . *est dénué de tout fondement.*"

C'est sur la foi de ces déclarations solennelles et publiques que de nombreux citoyens, non seulement d'Anvers, mais de toutes les parties du pays, ont franchi à nouveau la frontière et sont revenus dans leurs foyers.

Or, ces hommes qui sont rentrés en Belgique après des engagements aussi formels, seront demain envoyés en Allemagne pour y être astreints à ce travail forcé qu'on a promis de ne pas leur appliquer.

Dans ces conditions, nous croyons être en droit de demander que la mesure prise soit rapportée.

Nous ajoutons que le traité de Contich stipule formellement que les gardes civiques ne seront pas traités comme prisonniers de guerre ; il ne peut donc s'agir que de les transporter en Allemagne pour un traitement encore plus rigoureux.

Le préambule de l'ordonnance dont nous nous occupons semble faire grief à nos ouvriers de leur inaction, invoque le souci de l'ordre public et s'inquiète des charges croissantes de la charité publique.

Nous nous permettons de faire remarquer à Votre Excellence que lors des invasions des armées allemandes, il y avait dans ce pays de considérables approvisionnements en matières premières dont la transformation eût occupé pendant longtemps d'innombrables ouvriers.

Ces stocks ont été enlevés et transportés en Allemagne.

Il y avait des usines complètement outillées qui auraient pu travailler pour l'exportation vers les pays neutres. Les machines-outils et bien d'autres ont été enlevées, en grand nombre, et ont été envoyées en Allemagne.

Certes, il est arrivé que nos ouvriers aient refusé du travail offert par l'occupant, parce que ce travail tendait à l'assister dans ses occupations militaires ; à des gros salaires gagnés à ce prix, ils ont préféré les privations. Mais quel est le patriote et quel est l'homme de cœur qui n'admirerait pas ces pauvres gens pour cette dignité et pour ce courage ?

Aucun reproche d'inaction ne peut donc être fait à nos classes ouvrières qui, pour l'amour du travail, ne le cèdent à personne.

L'ordonnance invoque en outre le souci du bon ordre et se préoccupe de ne pas laisser de nombreux chômeurs à charge de la bienfaisance publique.

L'ordre n'a pas été troublé.

Quant à l'assistance sociale, il est vrai que des millions ont été dépensés en secours aux chômeurs depuis le début de la guerre en Belgique. Mais pour cet immense effort de solidarité rien n'a été demandé au Gouvernement allemand, ni même au Trésor belge administré sous votre surveillance et alimenté par nos contribuables.

Le souci d'un argent qui ne vient pas d'elle, ne doit inquiéter l'Allemagne, et Votre Excellence n'ignore pas que non la bienfaisance publique, mais le Comité National assure le budget de cette œuvre si nécessaire et le fera dans l'avenir comme il l'a fait dans le passé.

Aucun des motifs invoqués à l'appui de la politique nouvelle ne nous apparaît comme fondé.

Dans l'histoire de la guerre, on chercherait en vain, depuis deux siècles, un précédent.

Et dans les guerres de la Révolution, pu de l'Empire, ni dans celles qui ont ensuite désolé l'Europe, personne n'a porté atteinte au principe sacré de la liberté individuelle des populations paisibles et inoffensives.

Où s'arrêterait-on dans cette voie si la raison d'État pouvait justifier un pareil traitement ? Même dans les colonies, le travail forcé a disparu à notre époque.

En conséquence, nous prions Votre Excellence de prendre en considération l'exposé que nous venons de lui soumettre et de renvoyer dans leurs foyers ceux de nos concitoyens qui ont été déportés en Allemagne à la suite de l'ordonnance du 2 novembre 1916.

[Suivent les signatures des Sénateurs, Députés et Notables d'Anvers.]

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von Bissing,
Gouverneur général en Belgique, Bruxelles.

Translation

ANTWERP, *November* 7, 1918.

EXCELLENCY,—By virtue of an order of the Military Governor of Antwerp, given according to the instructions of the Governor-General in Belgium and dated November 2, 1916, our fellow-citizens without work, whose names are on the lists of the Meldeamt, are now called to present themselves at the Southern Railway Station. From there they will be transported by force if necessary to Germany, there to be compelled to perform labour that will be assigned to them.

The same measures have been taken in the rest of the country.

Without judgment, without having committed any wrong, thousands of free citizens are thus deported against their will to an enemy land, far from their homes, far from their wives and children, there to submit to a treatment the hardest of all for a free man—forced labour.

Deputies, Senators, Notables of Antwerp and of its agglomeration, we would consider ourselves as having failed in every one of our duties if such things could happen under our eyes without our using the right that we have to address ourselves in all circumstances to the executive power to make known our complaints or reservations or our protestations.

By what right is forced labour with deportation introduced in our unhappy country ?

Such is the question to which we seek in vain a response.

International law condemns such a measure.

There is not a modern author that justifies it. The texts of The Hague Conventions, limiting requisitions to the profit of the army of occupation, are directly opposed to it.

The constitutional right of all European countries, Germany among them, is not less opposed to it. The most illustrious of your sovereigns, Frederick II, has honoured the individual liberty as a dogma, and the right of every citizen to dispose of his faculties and his work as he wishes to. The occupant must respect these essential principles, which for centuries have become the common patrimony of humanity.

It cannot be disputed that Belgian workmen deported by virtue of the measures in question liberate proportionally German working men, in giving them freedom to go and fight the brothers and the sons of the workmen who have been carried away by force. This is an evident co-operation in the war against our country which article 52 of the Convention of The Hague prohibits in those very terms.

That is not all.

The morning after the occupation of Antwerp hundreds and thousands of our fellow-citizens left their country and took refuge in Holland, in the region situated along the frontier.

The most reassuring declarations were made to them by the German authorities.

On October 9 General von Besseler, Commander-in-Chief of the besieging army, submitted to the negotiators sent to Contich a declaration stating "the disarmed Gardes Civiques will not be considered as prisoners of war."

Under the same date Lieutenant-General von Schultz, called to the commandment of the fortified place of Antwerp, had proclaimed the following:

"The undersigned, commanding the fortified place of Antwerp, declares that nothing is opposed to the return of the inhabitants to their homes.

"*Not one will be molested.*

"*Disarmed Gardes Civiques can safely return.*"

On October 16, 1914, Cardinal Mercier communicated to the population a declaration signed by General von Huene, Military Governor of Antwerp, in which the latter said *in terminis*, for the purpose of publication:

"The young men need not fear to be sent to Germany, either to be enrolled in the army *or to be employed in forced labour.*"

A short time afterwards the eminent prelate of Belgium asked Baron von der Goltz, Governor-General in Belgium, to ratify for the whole of the country, without limit of time, the guarantees which General von Huene had given him for the province of Antwerp.

He succeeded in doing so.

Finally, on October 18, 1914. the military authority of Antwerp gave, under his signature, to the delegates of General van Terwisga, commanding the Dutch army in the field, a declaration confirming not only that young men and disarmed Gardes Civiques could return to Belgium and need not be troubled, but added besides: "The rumour according to which the young Belgians will be sent into Germany . . . *is entirely without foundation.*"

It is on the faith of these solemn and public declarations that numberless citizens, not only of Antwerp but of all parts of the country, came back again across the frontier and returned to their homes.

Now, these men who returned to Belgium after such formal declarations will be sent to Germany, there to be obliged to perform this forced labour which they were promised they would never be compelled to do.

Under these circumstances we believe we have the right to ask that the measure taken be rescinded.

We add that the treaty of Contich stipulates formally that the Gardes Civiques will not be treated as prisoners of war. There can, then, be no question of transporting them to Germany to receive a treatment still more rigorous.

The preamble of the ordinance which we are considering seems to complain of the inaction of the working men, and invokes the care for public order, and is troubled about the increasing charges on public charity.

We may be permitted to remark to Your Excellency that at the time of the invasion of the German army there were in the country considerable stocks of raw materials, of which the transformation would have given work for a long time to numerous working men. These stocks were taken away and transported to Germany. There were factories completely fitted out with machinery which could have worked for exportation into neutral countries. The machines and tools and much else were taken away in great numbers and sent to Germany.

To be sure, it has happened that our working men have refused employment offered by the occupant because this aimed to aid the occupant in his military enterprises; instead of high wages gained at such a price, they preferred privations. But where is the patriot, where is the man of heart, who would not have admired these workmen for their dignity and their courage?

No one can reproach with inaction, then, our working classes, who cede to no one in their love of labour.

The ordinance invokes besides a desire to establish good order, and is preoccupied by the fear that numberless unemployed will be a charge on public charity.

The order has not been troubled.

As to charity, it is true that millions have been dispensed in aiding the

unemployed since the beginning of the war in Belgium. But for that great effort of solidarity, nothing has been asked from the German Government, neither from the Belgian Treasury administered under your surveillance and furnished by our taxes. Germany need not worry about money that does not belong to her, and Your Excellency is not unaware that it is not the public charity, but the Comité National which assures the budget of this work so necessary, and that it will perform this duty in the future as it has done in the past.

None of the motives invoked to sustain the new policy appears to us as being well founded.

In the history of war one will seek in vain during two centuries a precedent, and in the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire, or in those that afterwards desolated Europe, no one has ever touched the sacred principle of individual liberty of peaceful and inoffensive populations.

Where would one stop in this road if reasons of state should justify such a treatment? Even in colonies forced labour has disappeared at the present time.

In consequence, we beg Your Excellency to take into consideration the views which we have just submitted to him, and to return to their homes those of our fellow-citizens who were deported to Germany as a result of the order of November 2, 1916.

[Here follow the signatures of the Senators, Deputies, and Notables of Antwerp.]

To His Excellency Baron von Bissing,
Governor-General in Belgium, Brussels.

NOTE 9 (see p. 272).

BRUXELLES, *le* 18 *novembre* 1916.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,—Du fond de notre abîme de détresse, notre supplication s'élève vers vous.

En nous adressant à vous, c'est à votre gouvernement, c'est, aussi, aux femmes—nos sœurs—de la nation que vous représentez parmi nous que nous dénonçons l'inique abus de force dont est victime notre malheureux peuple, sans défense.

Depuis le début de cette atroce guerre, nous avons assisté impuissantes, le cœur percé des glaives de toutes les douleurs, à des événements terribles qui ont fait reculer notre civilisation aux âges de la horde barbare.

Le crime qui se perpètre actuellement sous vos yeux, Monsieur le Ministre: nous visons la déportation de milliers d'hommes contraints de travailler en terre ennemie contre les intérêts de leur pays, ce crime ne saurait trouver aucun semblant d'excuse dans la nécessité de guerre car il constitue une violation par la force d'un droit sacré de la conscience humaine.

Pour quelque motif que ce soit, il ne peut être admis que l'on contraigne un citoyen à travailler directement ou indirectement *pour* l'ennemi *contre* ses frères qui combattent.

La Convention de La Haye a consacré ce principe.

C'est cependant à cette extrémité monstrueuse, contraire à la morale et aux lois internationales, que l'occupant acule les milliers d'hommes qui, déjà, ont été déportés en Allemagne et tous ceux qui, demain, subiront le même sort si, du dehors, de l'Europe et des États-Unis neutres, ne vient le secours.

Ah! les femmes de Belgique ont su, elles aussi, accomplir leur devoir à l'heure du danger: elles n'ont pas affaibli par leurs larmes le courage des soldats de l'honneur. Vaillamment, elles ont donné à leur patrie ceux qu'elles aimaient. . . . C'est le sang des mères qui coule sur les champs de bataille.

Aujourd'hui, ceux qu'on leur ravit ne partent pas pour des tâches glorieuses. Ce sont des esclaves enchaînés qui, dans un exil déprimant, sous la menace de la faim, de la prison, de la mort auront à accomplir le plus vil travail: servir l'ennemi contre la patrie.

Elles ne peuvent se résigner à laisser s'accomplir cette abomination sans faire entendre leur protestation.

Elles ne songent pas à leur propre souffrance, à leurs tortures morales, à l'abandon et la misère dans lesquels elles vont se trouver avec leurs enfants.

Elles vous parlent au nom des droits imprescriptibles de l'honneur et de la conscience.

On a dit des femmes qu'elles sont "la toute puissance suppliante."

Nous nous sommes autorisées de cette parole, Monsieur le Ministre, pour tendre nos mains vers vous et adresser à votre pays un suprême appel.

Nous espérons qu'en lisant ces lignes, vous sentirez à chaque mot battre le cœur douloureux des femmes de Belgique et trouverez dans une large et humaine sympathie d'impérieux motifs d'intervention.

La volonté unanime des peuples neutres, énergiquement exprimée, peut seule contrebalancer celle de l'autorité militaire allemande.

Cette aide que les nations neutres peuvent, et par conséquent doivent leur prêter, sera-t-elle refusée aux Belges opprimés ? . . .

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Ministre, l'hommage de notre considération la plus distinguée.

BARONNE C. DE BROQUEVILLE,
COMTESSE JEAN DE MÉRODE,
MADAME VEUVE CHARLES GRAUX.

Pour l'Union Patriotique des Femmes belges, JANE BRIGODE.
Pour le Féminisme chrétien de Belgique, LOUISE VAN DEN PLAS.
Pour la Fédération des Femmes catholiques, H. DE TROOZ.
Pour l'Assistance Discrète, COMTESSE DE GRUNNE.
Pour le Secrétariat général des Syndicats féminins chrétiens de Belgique, VICTOIRE CAPPES.
Pour la Ligue Constance Teichmann, M. BAERT.
Pour les Arts de la Femme, M. PHILIPPSON.
Pour le Comptoir de l'Œuvre du Travail, C. MEEÛS MALE.
Pour la Fédération nationale des Institutrices chrétiennes de Belgique, GABRIELLE FONTAINE.
Pour le Comité National des Fédérations des Cercles de Fermières de Belgique, BARONNE ROTSART DE HERTAING.
Pour l'Union des Anciennes Élèves de l'École Normale de la Ville de Bruxelles, B. LEYSENS.
Pour la Ligue belge du Droit des Femmes, MARIE PARENT.
Pour le Comité des Dames patronnesses de la Ligue nationale belge contre la Tuberculose, COMTESSE JOHN D'OULTREMONT.
Pour les Femmes socialistes belges, MARIA TILLEMONDE.
Pour l'Alliance des Femmes contre l'Abus de l'Alcool, A. BOCH.
Pour l'Union des Femmes belges contre l'Alcoolisme, LAURE LEVOZ HAUZEUR.
Pour la Ligue des Femmes chrétiennes, MARQUISE DU CHASTELER.
Pour l'Œuvre des patronages de Jeunes Filles, BARONNE HERMANN DE WOELMENT.
Pour le "Boerinenbond" belge, M. LEMAIRE.
Pour l'Entr'Aide, Comité d'Assistance d'Œuvres sociales, MADAME LÉO ERRERA.
Pour le patronage "Réunions Amicales," COMTESSE HÉLÈNE GOBLET D'ALVIELLA.
Pour l'Union Post-Scolaire de l'École Moyenne C. (filles), L. E. CARTER.
Pour les Cercles d'Études féminines de Belgique, MADELEINE DE ROO.
Pour le Lyceum, MARTHE BOEL DE KERCHOVE DE DESTERGHEM.

À Son Excellence Monsieur Brand Whitlock,
Envoyé Extraordinaire et Ministre Plénipotentiaire
des États-Unis d'Amérique.

Translation

BRUSSELS, *November* 18, 1916.

MR. MINISTER,—From the depths of our well of misery our supplications rise to you.

In addressing ourselves to you we denounce to your Government, as well as

to the women of the nation which you represent in our midst, our sisters, the criminal abuse of force of which our unhappy and defenceless people is a victim.

Since the beginning of this atrocious war we have looked, impotently and with our hearts torn with every sorrow, at terrible events that put our civilization back into the age of the barbarian hordes.

Mr. Minister, the crime that is now being committed under your eyes, the deportation of thousands of men compelled to work on enemy soil against the interests of their country, cannot find any shadow of excuse on the ground of military necessity, for it constitutes a violation by force of a sacred right of human conscience.

Whatever be the motive, it cannot be admitted that citizens be compelled to work directly or indirectly *for* the enemy *against* their brothers who are fighting.

The Convention of The Hague has consecrated this principle.

Nevertheless the occupying Power is forcing thousands of men to this monstrous extremity, which is contrary to morals and to international law; these men who have already been taken to Germany and those who to-morrow will undergo the same fate if, from the outside, from Europe and from the United States, as neutrals, no help is offered.

Oh! The Belgian women have also known how to carry on their duty in the hour of danger; they have not weakened the courage of the soldiers of honour by their tears; they have bravely given to their country those whom they loved. The blood of mothers is flowing on the battlefield.

Those who are torn from them to-day do not go to deeds of glory. They are slaves in chains, who, in a dark exile, threatened by hunger, prison, death, will be called upon to perform the most odious work: service to the enemy against the native land.

The mothers cannot stand by while such an abomination is taking place without making heard their voices in protest.

They are not thinking of their own sufferings, the abandonment and the misery in which they are to be placed with their children.

They address you in the name of the unalterable rights of honour and conscience.

It is said that women are "all-powerful suppliants."

We venture to make use of this word, Mr. Minister, to extend our hands to you and to address to your country a last appeal.

We trust that in reading these lines you will feel at each word the unhappy heart-beats of the Belgian women and will find in your broad and humane sympathy imperative reasons for intervention.

The united will of the neutral peoples, energetically expressed, alone can counterbalance that of the German authorities.

This assistance which the neutral nations can, and therefore must, lend us—will it be refused to the oppressed Belgians?

Pray accept, Mr. Minister, the homage of our most distinguished consideration.

BARONESS C. DE BROQUEVILLE,
COUNTESS JEANNE DE MÉRODE,
MADAME CHARLES GRAUX.

Representatives of all the Women's Societies in Belgium,
(*Twenty-four signatures*).

To His Excellency Mr. Brand Whitlock,
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
of the United States of America.

XXXIV. THE SLAVERS DRAW NEAR

THERE was always a mystery about that dark region of which we spoke as the Étape; the word had come to have an evil connotation far removed from its ordinary signification. We heard of what was going on behind that tragic veil only from the gossip and the rumours that the delegates of the C.R.B. brought to town on their weekly visits to headquarters in the Rue des Colonies. My own impression of the slave-drive going on there was vague; all I knew was that workmen, intelligent, alive, full of wit and humour and hope and ambition, precisely like the men in those crowds at home to whom I had so often made political speeches, were being seized, herded together like animals, imprisoned in vile corrals, pawed and picked over and man-handled like beasts in the market-place, and that then they disappeared in swiftly passing trains, in the darkness and cold of the night, singing "La Brabançonne" and "The Lion of Flanders," dropping letters now and then for some chance compatriot to pick up by the wayside. Now and then men who had somehow crossed the line between Étape and Occupationgebiet would bring in the rumours that were whispered in all that region where the hideous terror spread. At Lauase, and in the country round, it was said that Belgians had been seen working in the trenches; at Monsville and at Roisin even the station-masters were taken. In the communes of the canton of Frasne the men to be deported had been selected at random. At Jemappes the entire male population was summoned to appear by means of *affiches*, and the Germans took indiscriminately clerks, workmen, students, and merchants. The men from Flanders and the district of Tournai were sent toward France, the men from Renaix were sent to Mortagne, in France; those from Wiers to Le Quesnoy. Boatmen taking macadam to the north of France said that they had seen Belgians there employed in discharging the macadam. In order to obtain the signatures of these men to contracts the Germans had told them that they would be sent away immediately if they refused to sign, but that if they accepted the conditions they would be given several days' respite.

Then we felt the hideous thing draw nearer; the slavers had crossed the line, they were plying their trade in the Occupa-

tiongebiet. Early in November they were operating in the Hainaut. On the 6th of that month they were seizing men at Lessines. There was no longer any pretence of confining the seizures to *chômeurs*; the Germans took not only boys, if they were big and strong, but men over sixty years of age. The greater number of the men were workers from the quarries, but even the clerks in banks and counting-houses were seized. The chief clerk at the station and his brother, both railway workmen, were deported. The town was first surrounded by troops, and the business of choosing the men for deportation took place in the school. From the school they were taken directly to the trains which were to bear them away. The number of men taken from Lessines, not including those taken from the near-by communes, was over two thousand. The *affiche*, of which the following is the text, was posted on the walls of the town, and every man, including priests and civil authorities, had to present himself:

ORDRE

Par ordre de Monsieur le Gouverneur général tous les habitants mâles de la Commune de Lessines ayant passé la 17e année devront se présenter le 6 novembre 1916 à 8 heures du matin à l'école du camp Milon.

Se munir des certificats d'identité et des cartes de contrôle. Les personnes qui ne donneront pas suite à cet ordre devront s'attendre à une punition sévère.

MONS, *le 24 octobre* 1916. (*Suivent les signatures.*)

Translation

ORDER

By order of the Governor-General all the male inhabitants of the commune of Lessines who have passed the age of seventeen must present themselves, on November 6 at eight o'clock in the morning, at the school of Camp Milon.

Each must be supplied with a card of identity and a card of control. Those who do not obey this decree are liable to severe punishment.

MONS, *October* 24, 1916. (*Signatures.*)

Mr. Gregory, the director of the C.R.B., had at once organized a service by which the men sent away were given what comforts were possible under the circumstances; the Americans distributed blankets, clothing, caps, and mittens, and enough food to last for several days. The delegates were instructed to be

present and to render any service they could, and Mr. Tuck and Mr. Gade, delegates of the C.R.B. in the province of Hainaut, went over to the commune of St.-Ghislain on the morning of October 29 to witness the selections, to prevent the seizure of the employés of the C.N. and the C.R.B., and to distribute food to those who were deported. They came back sick with horror and full of rage at the mediæval barbarities they had witnessed, so much so that after what he saw Mr. Tuck resigned from the Commission, left Belgium, and entered the British army to fight against such cruelty and oppression.

About two thousand men summoned from all the neighbouring communes had been assembled at St.-Ghislain. The women had followed them in tears, and at the point where the selections were made lines of soldiers kept the women back by their bayonets. No effort was made to distinguish *chômeurs*; indeed, the Germans did quite the reverse, showing a decided preference for men then employed as carpenters and blacksmiths. The men chosen were not allowed even to speak to their wives or waiting families, only a despairing glance of farewell, a wave of the hand to the women sobbing and wringing their hands there in the cold, while the indifferent soldiers in grey kept them back with their bayonets. Then through files of soldiers the men were marched off to the long line of freight-cars waiting on the siding.

The following day, November 7, it was the turn of the men of Jurbise; the selections were made by employing that formula which was so much like the cruel chance of a blind fate. "*Recht, Links,*" the officer cried, and the men passed either to the right or to the left, to freedom or to bondage. No account was taken of their condition or of the condition of their families or dependents; no effort was made to ascertain whether or not the men were *chômeurs*; they were asked no questions. Farmers were seized even when they had no one to take their places in the fields, and some of the men left young children or wives alone at home.

At Quiévrain, on October 26, the men were convoked with those of the communes of Thulin, Élouges, Baisieux, Hensies, and Montrœul-sur-Haine. All male persons above the age of seventeen had been ordered to present themselves. Those who obeyed were huddled in the inner courtyard of the boys' middle school and kept waiting there for hours in a cold rain and wind,

and most of them had brought no extra clothing. Priests, school teachers and instructors, employés of the communes, policemen, postmen, customs officials, and the employés of the C.N. and the C.R.B. were called first and liberated without difficulty, as were a number of the sick and aged, though old men were hustled about with the usual brutality. The witness who described it was unable to determine by what factor the choice was made; it had no relation to *chômage*, for many were then and always had been employed; farmers, students, the manager of a factory, and others whom he knew, were seized. All day long a train had been waiting at the station, and during the afternoon, in their separate groups, the men thus impressed were marched off to the cattle-cars.

The press-gang operated at Ninove on November 8, and I had the story from a man who lived there. Those who had not presented themselves in response to the summons were dragged out of their beds at night; even the sick were not spared. A man, the father of three children, who was ill, had to get up, go down into the street and go off with the soldiers. They were all taken to Alost, crowded in a shed used to dry hops; there were four hundred and sixty-seven of them. Each of them had a couch of straw 2 inches thick and a space 2 metres long by 55 centimetres wide—that would be about 7 feet by 2 feet. In this space they had to eat and to sleep and to receive anybody who came by chance to see them. Each of these beds, said the man, "gave the spectacle of a drama impossible to describe." There was a young man who had been lying there ill for two days in a violent crisis of asthma; he had been cared for by a charitable woman of the town, but now he had no medical care. For two days he had been imploring air—asthma, with four hundred and sixty-seven men crowded in a hop-drier! The man saw him lying there gasping horribly, and went out to see the German Kommandant. The Kommandant merely remarked that the military doctor was doing his duty. At five o'clock that evening the man went back to see the sick man and found that he had not yet received the visit of any doctor. A few days later the man with the asthma died.

While he was talking with the Kommandant during the morning visit, the Kommandant asked my informant to taste the soup. The first kettle that was shown him contained a soup

made of rice, which he tasted and found very good—"*fort bonne.*" The second kettle contained a soup made of turnip-cabbages—*choux-raves.* The Kommandant said that the first soup was for the Belgians, and that the second was for the German soldiers, who called it *delicatesse.* When he went back in the evening the Belgians told him, however, that the *delicatesse* was given to them and the rice soup to the Germans. The Belgians asked him to make no further efforts to have them set free; they said that it was useless and they preferred instead that he ask that authorization be given immediately for them to go to their destination, for if they were compelled to stay three days longer crouching in that hop-drier they would all die of sickness and of privation.

The mayors of the provinces of Namur and of Limbourg received from the German authorities a circular letter of the following text:

MR. MAYOR.

You are requested to submit before October 24 three accurate lists of unemployed and men out of work to the German Kommandant having jurisdiction over your commune.

In these lists should be given all men receiving any kind of relief, payment from the commune, the province, the Belgian Government, etc., or from the Comité National—Committee of Relief.

The most rigorous measures will be taken against you personally in the event that the lists are not transmitted to the German Kommandant on time, or are submitted incompletely prepared, either through carelessness or ill intention.

The Mayor of Maeseyck, in the province of Limbourg, was ordered by the German authorities to give a list of the unemployed registered at the Meldeamt. He replied that he had no such list, and referred the Germans to the president of the local relief committee, one of the branches of the Comité National, who answered that the committee could not furnish such lists until after consultation with the Patron Ministers of the Comité National. The representative of the German authorities replied that if the lists were not immediately handed over he would proceed to make arrests, and in the presence of this threat the lists of unemployed inscribed at the Meldeamt were delivered.

In the communes of Quevaucamps, Grandglise, Blaton, Belœil, and Ath, in the Hainaut, the Germans demanded of the mayors the lists of unemployed of their localities, ordering that they be grouped in four categories, according to their trades. The mayors

applied to the local committees of the Comité National to secure these lists, but these committees uniformly refused to give them.

The same thing was going on in the district of Courtrai. There the German authorities had asked the burgomasters to furnish the lists of unemployed; the burgomasters in general refused to give any information whatsoever. In some cases the German authorities took the lists by force, in others the committees were not molested. A thousand men, some already employed and others unemployed, were seized and deported. The men were ordered to take with them clothing and effects amounting to the value of two hundred francs, and were promised a wage of thirty pfennigs a day.

XXXV. AT MARCHE, NIVELLES, AND WAVRE

I HAVE told these stories, selected almost at random from the mass that were related at the Legation, as nearly as possible as they were told to me, even with the occasional repetitions they may imply. They were told baldly, with no effort at effect, and I have no doubt that the reader will have experienced, as I have experienced in reading them over again, a certain disappointment, or if not that, a vague regret that there were not more details. But to tell a story with details, to reproduce a tragic scene in all its poignancy, requires a rare talent that was wholly beyond the powers of those who related these incidents; they told them in quite a matter-of-fact, prosaic way, without the embellishment of conscious art. And I myself, in those dark and terrible days, had heard too many tales of suffering to have any more the courage to intensify their reality by drawing out their narrators with questions. To confess the fact, I used to try to harden my own heart, to keep down my emotions, to say *chômeurs* instead of men, "deportation" instead of slavery, and oftentimes, I fear, to seek to have done with it as quickly as possible, else I should not have been able to get through the days that were made so much harder by the appeals that implied the faith that I could stop it all if I would.

"*Excellence, nous comptons sur vous!*"

One day there was a great stalwart miner from Charleroi, president of his labour union, who, in the French he spoke with

the Walloon accent, and under the influence of that vague notion of diplomatic powers and responsibilities that prevails rather generally on this planet, said:

"*Je vous signale ces faits, Excellence, afin que vous, en votre qualité de Ministre protecteur de la Belgique, puissiez le mieux remplir votre devoir.*"

But as the dread thing drew nearer the tales were more circumstantial, we had them in more abundant detail, and sometimes from several sources, so that it was possible to have a more vivid picture of the events that were still, in the early days of December, almost beyond belief. For instance, the levy made at Marche on December 13. Marche is a Walloon village down in the province of Luxembourg, east of Dinant; on December 8 little red placards posted about the town informed the population that on the 13th all men between the ages of seventeen and fifty-five were to assemble in the market-place, having with them food for two days and a bag of warm clothing; the same little red placards were posted in all the villages around Marche. During the days intervening before the 13th the Kreischef allowed it to become known that he would exempt certain classes, such as lawyers, doctors, and clergymen, from appearing personally. Many men belonging to the well-to-do classes, and some of those who had helped the officers or the non-commissioned officers of the occupying force to comforts in the way of food, also contrived to have their cards stamped with the envied seal of exemption without appearing on the day appointed. And, too, there were rumours in the town to the effect that certain feminine influences were active, and in several cases successful.

On the morning of the 13th, then, about four thousand men appeared in the market-place. Many had to tramp all through the night to get there, and they all had heavy bags, like rücksacks, on their backs. At nine o'clock the officers who were to conduct the work arrived on the scene. These officers had not been quartered at Marche; they were indeed strangers to the place, and it was understood that they were to perform the same duty for the whole of the province of Luxembourg. The Kreischef and the local Kommandant, however, were present as onlookers.

The men were ordered to group themselves by communes, and each of these groups was called up in turn, and in single file, each man holding his cap in one hand and his *carte d'identité* in

the other, made to march past an officer by the side of whom stood the burgomaster of the commune under inspection. Then began that fateful "*Recht, Links*"; those who went to the right were free, those who went to the left were slaves. If a man appeared to be over forty, or unfit for physical work, he was ordered to the right. "*Nach Hause!*" the officer would say, without looking at the *carte d'identité*. But in the case of younger men the officer took the card and glanced at the occupation; a railwayman, for instance, was promptly ordered to the left, the officer simply saying "*Eisenbahner!*" and he was turned toward the waiting train. A farmer or agricultural labourer was generally asked how many hectares he cultivated; if they proved to be many the man was generally released, otherwise he was taken. "*Links, Eisenbahner!*" When there were doubts the officer asked, "Are you married?" And if the answer was in the affirmative, "How many children?" If there were children the man was set free. But in no case was a man asked whether he was employed or unemployed. Youths between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two were always taken; men of means were generally released.

The burgomaster was rarely allowed to intervene A gentleman I know well, M. H——, prominent in the region, was there to help his neighbours if he could. The burgomaster of his commune was too old to be present, and M. H—— (he is still inside) took his place. He managed to get a hearing from the officer on behalf of six men from his own village, three of whom were released; but his attempt to intervene a seventh time was stopped and he was ordered to keep quiet; he did not obey, and the officer said he would have him forcibly removed, and later threatened to arrest him.

Four thousand men were marched past the two officers in four hours; each officer, therefore, had to examine two thousand men in that length of time—seven seconds and a fraction to decide whether a man should be free or slave, in December 1916!

The fact is that the number of men to be taken was fixed arbitrarily and in advance for each commune, although the officers could have had no idea of the proportion of able-bodied men they would find among the population. The town of Aye, for instance, with eleven hundred people, had about the same number of men taken as Marche, with four thousand inhabitants.

When the march past was finished the officers announced that

they would hear complaints from the burgomasters about specially "deserving" cases, and to hear these they adjourned to the back room of a small café. The little *estaminet* was at once invaded by an excited group of protesting notables from the different villages, burgomasters, notaries, curés in their black cassocks, local politicians, or men of affairs, all shouting, clamouring, gesticulating—and the officer sitting at a table in the middle of the room. This went on for three-quarters of an hour, but after the most pushing burgomasters had managed to shoulder their way up to the table and to be heard more or less patiently, the officers declared that they had had enough, that the proceedings were at an end, that all the men who had been taken would be sent to Germany, and that any further complaints would have to be made in writing.

H—— managed to get a hearing before the session was concluded. With the curé of his village he pleaded for four men who had been taken and had left large families at home. After listening for a minute or two the officer declared that he would free two of these four men; H—— and the curé were to choose them themselves. They chose, of course, those having the most children. H—— then pleaded earnestly for an old man alone in the world, save an only son who had been taken, and, thanks to the intervention of the local Kreischef, who seemed to know something of the case, this boy was also freed.

He then brought up the case of a poor widow of Aye whose three sons had all been taken. The officer shook his head, declared that it was impossible; three men of the same name were never taken in the same commune. H—— explained that these boys, on account of their employment, lived in different communes, and that therefore they had appeared separately. The officer replied that if they lived in three different communes they did not live with their mother; therefore, whether they worked away from their mother in Germany or in Belgium, it did not greatly matter; they would be sent away; and they were.

Thus chance ruled, when favouritism or spite were not in play. The clerk in a local bank had passed the officer and had been declared free; he had gone home in joy and was eating his dinner when a soldier came, arrested him and took him back to the market-place. According to village gossip a German

officer had been an unsuccessful suitor for the favours of a village beauty who was the bank clerk's sweetheart, and through the influence of this officer the clerk, who had been released, was retaken and sent off to Germany.

The cards of exemption, which, under our express and formal arrangement with the German authorities, had been delivered to the employés of the C.N. and C.R.B., signed by the American delegate, Mr. Osborn, were in most cases of no avail. The officer would take one of these cards, show it to another officer standing by, and this officer, evidently in authority, would shake his head, and his companion would put the card in his pocket and order the man to be deported.

When the operation had ceased the men were at once marched off to the railway-station, embarked on a train in waiting, and sent, it was said, to Alten Grabow.

Then it was the turn of Nivelles, the charming old town of about twelve thousand inhabitants a few miles south of Waterloo. On November 4 a notice was posted on the walls of Nivelles ordering all men over seventeen years old to report on November 8 at nine o'clock in the morning, eight o'clock Belgian time, in the Place St.-Paul. They must have their *cartes d'identité* and the card issued by the Meldeamt, and, sinister portent, they might bring small hand-baggage. Similar notices had been posted in all the communes near by. The entire region was stricken with terror. Two days later German troops appeared in Nivelles, filling all the streets; sentinels were posted on all the highways, roads, and footpaths; none could leave the town without written permission from the Kommandantur; there was a veritable state of siege, to which fear added its anguish. On the morning of the 8th a cold dismal rain was falling, and from dawn on to eight o'clock miserable processions from all the neighbouring villages came wending into town, old, hobbling men, some ill, drenched to the skin, carrying their poor pathetic little bundles, until thousands were crowded in the Place St.-Paul, with its beautiful entrance to the old cloistered nunnery there under the shadow of the church of Ste.-Gertrude, its two round grey towers and the statue of Jacques Nivelles looking down from the eleventh century on a scene of such barbarity as he had never beheld. There were old men of seventy and eighty standing there in the cold, driving rain, and they stood thus for hours. Finally, as

their cards were examined, first those between seventy and eighty, then those between sixty and seventy, were allowed to go, and they plodded off homeward. This took a long time. The others who remained were then marched in columns of sixes between lines of soldiers, behind whose hedge of bayonets the women were pressed closely, shawls over their heads, sobbing, their eyes wide, their faces drawn with terror and despair, to the Delacroix factories a mile away. They were marching thus until noon in the pitiless rain. Then the examination was begun and continued until five o'clock in the evening. The Delacroix factories were connected by a spur with the railway-station at Baulers, and on this spur freight-cars stood, the little goods-wagons of continental railways. Each man as he was chosen was hustled into one of these cars, and when it was full the car was at once hauled out and another empty car brought to take its place. The men were selected, as seemed now to be the rule everywhere, according to their physical appearance, the strong taken, the weak left. Once taken a man was not allowed to communicate with his family; he was hauled away in that crowded little goods-wagon, in the rain and the darkness and the cold, while wife and children waited in the little cottage. Night came down on Nivelles; the rain was still falling, and the waiting ones in all those homes only knew that those they loved had been taken away when the German soldiers, their work done, came marching back from Baulers and into Nivelles, singing through the dark streets of the little town where there were only tears.

It was on the morning of November 14 that in the twenty-two villages round about Wavre a notice was posted convoking the men at the *chef-lieu* of the canton. The *affiche* said:

AVIS

Tous les hommes de plus de 17 ans jusqu'à 55 ans inclusivement de la Commune de —— sont tenus de se présenter le 15 novembre 1916, à 8 h. (heure allemande), sur la place du Marché à Wavre.

Le Bourgmestre devra être présent. Les intéressés devront être porteurs de leur certificat d'identité et, le cas échéant, de leur carte de contrôle (*Meldekarte*). Il est permis d'apporter de petits bagages à main. Ceux qui manqueront au contrôle seront immédiatement transportés, sans délai et par voie de contrainte, aux lieux où ils devront travailler. En outre, on pourra leur appliquer de fortes peines d'imprisonnement et des amendes élevées.

Les ecclésiastiques, les médecins, les avocats, les instituteurs et les professeurs ne doivent pas venir au dit contrôle.

Der Kaiserliche Kreischef von Nivelles,
GRAF VON SCHWERIN.

OTTIGNIES, *le 3 novembre 1916.*

Translation

NOTICE

All men of from seventeen to fifty-five years, inclusive, of the commune of ——, will report on November 15, 1916, at 8 o'clock (German time), at the Place du Marché at Wavre.

The Burgomaster must be present and interested parties must have their certificates of identity and, if necessary, their card of control (*Meldekarte*). They will be permitted to carry small hand baggage. Those who fail to report will be immediately transported, without delay, and by force, to the place where they must work. Besides, there may be applied to them heavy penalties of imprisonment and heavy fines.

Priests, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and professors do not have to report.

Der Kaiserliche Kreischef von Nivelles,
GRAF VON SCHWERIN.

OTTIGNIES, *November 3, 1916.*

The *affiche* had been posted at seven o'clock in the morning. It had been expected, feared, and yet there had been the vague, unreasoning hope that somehow it would not happen, but now there it was, on the walls. Twenty-four hours' notice given to leave home, family, friends, and to go off in the night and the cold to that dark and sinister Germany! The women had to warn those who were working and did not yet know. They had to warn them so that they might have time to prepare, so that they might pass with them that day, the last perhaps, and take such poor, pitiful measures of foresight as were possible. The women went to search and bring them home. And then there were poignant scenes, not alone the sorrow there is in all parting, but the anguish of such a parting as this. Those were poor homes. Two years of war, of high prices and rationing, had stripped them almost bare. In their cupboards there was little food, only that which was strictly necessary for each one, and on the morrow, if the father or the son were taken, there would be no other resource left. They made up their bundles, putting in them all they had, the last bit of clothing, the last piece of covering, the piece of the loaf of bread that remained, everything. "No matter," said one, "to-morrow we shall not care to eat."

They had to be at Wavrè at eight o'clock, and in order to reach the town in time they must start early and be an hour or two on the road. There were no vehicles; they had to walk, carrying their luggage. At six o'clock the interminable and lamentable processions set forth out of all those communes on all those roads, on the bleak morning of November in the bitter cold, in the biting wind, for Nature, almost as cruel as man, was full of menace. Most of the men would not allow their wives or children to go with them; the way was long and their presence would only make the parting harder. And so they trudged along, alone or in groups, walking in heavy silence over those well-known roads of happy memories. But there were some women who were not to be deterred, and they dragged themselves along behind, weeping.

The town of Wavre—a pretty place, or a place that was pretty before the Germans burned so many of its houses—was all grey and shivering that morning. It was surrounded by troops, and the processions entering by all the *chaussées* took the narrow streets that led to the Place du Marché, the square of old houses whose façades, blackened by fire and pierced by bullets in the earlier days of the invasion, stood gaunt and irresolute in the wind. The Germans had barred all the streets; access to the Square was forbidden to all but the men, and the crowd pressed against the barriers. The men were parked like animals according to their communes, and stood waiting with hanging heads, powerless, humiliated. From time to time some one would cry out a name, some word of encouragement—and farewell.

Then began the work of separation, of selecting those who were to go. A thousand at a time the men were marched into a school where the slavers sat. To get there the groups followed a street along the Dyle; it is a picturesque quarter of Wavre, one which in happier times the artists used to paint. That morning at the windows of all the houses there were faces of anguish—women, children, old men, in tears. There were even people on the roofs looking down on the sad cortège that passed along, their eyes seeking out a father or a husband, a son, a brother, or a lover. They waited four hours there in the Square before being marched to the school.

"I observed them," a man from one of the villages told me. "I knew many of them. I saw many whose faces had suddenly

grown pale. They walked with firm steps, but they were ashen white. I felt that anxiety had stopped the blood in their veins. They were the married men, those who had just left their wives and their children and were wondering whether they would see them soon again, whether it would be a long time, or never. The young unmarried men walked holding their heads high, something of defiance in their glance."

As they drew near to the school they looked up, suddenly attentive. There was a sound that swelled, gradually grew louder, and the faces lighted up. Yes, it was " La Brabançonne." There at the end of the courtyard was a group of men already marked for deportation, singing as loudly as they could the Belgian hymn. When they saw the others coming they cried out: " Don't sign ! don't sign ! " They held themselves erect, full of courage, pride, and manly will. There was not a complaint. When one of the men saw a friend go by he asked him to inform his family, to tell them that he had been taken, and then he resumed his defiant song.

The men from each commune were taken first into a room where a doctor examined those who had provided themselves with physicians' certificates stating that they were unfit for work. This German physician was indulgent, almost generous; now and then he pronounced liberations; but there was a second room, and here the fate of each man was decided brusquely, mechanically, in a few seconds and without appeal. It all depended on which one of the two words was pronounced by the German officer, those two banal words that had suddenly acquired a new and appalling significance; one of them set him at liberty, the other doomed him to slavery. There were several men in uniform, the Kreischef, the Civil Commissioner, and some officers with the rigid, inflexible, arbitrary attitude of military authority which tolerates no discussion. The burgomaster, an échevin, and the secretary of the commune were there too, authorized to assist at the examination of their constituents, but there was nothing they could do. The officers would not listen to any of their appeals. The decisions were made by two officers, one on each side of the room; they examined the men rapidly, beginning with the lads between seventeen and twenty-five years. They glanced at the card of identity which told who the bearer was, gave his trade if he had one, or his civil position; the officers

looked him over rapidly, as dealers might examine a horse. They asked but one question: "Were you a *chômeur*?" and then the inexorable decision, that one of the two words which here was fatal—"*Links.*" The man was lost, his fate had thus been decided by the will of a single man in less than ten seconds.

To leave the hall they had to pass through a door which had been divided by a barrier of wood into two narrow ways. Two soldiers guarded this barrier. The corridor to the left led to a hall where those who were to be sent to Germany, those on whom had been pronounced the laconic sentence of that word *Links*, had to pass. Those who passed to the right went out past a non-commissioned officer who stamped a seal on the card of identity, stating that their holders were set free; this right-hand corridor led to an open window before which there was a table; on the ground outside there was another table, and the man set free sprang on to the table inside, through the open window to the table outside, and so on to the ground. It looked as though he were running away. In his breast there was a vast, almost selfish relief, and then his heart would close again at the thought of the others who had not been so lucky. In the large hall the examination went on all day—"*Links, Recht; Links, Recht.*"

At the end of a little street not far from the school a crowd had gathered, a crowd that grew larger as the day advanced; the anxiety had been too great, they could not wait. The women, mothers, wives, sweethearts, had come from all the villages; they buttonholed everybody who came out, asking news of their own. "Is he taken?" "Has his case been passed on yet?" Oftentimes those who had been released did not know, they could not tell, and struggled to escape a second time from the importunities of these imploring women. They all sobbed, my friend told me, and those who could strain a released husband or son to their breasts sobbed more than the others.

Those who had been passed out *Links* were gathered in a large hall, and there each man was asked if he would sign a contract agreeing to work for the Germans for large wages. If he consented he gave his name and his address, and was authorized to go home for the few days' grace which his complaisance gained for him. If he refused he was immediately subjected to all sorts of menaces, told of pains and penalties that would befall him, and led away to join that agitated group of those who like him

would not submit, to be received with cheers as though he had won a victory, as indeed he had. Very few of them signed, very few consented, almost all refused. They had to wait a while, wait until the group was sufficiently large, and when it had grown to a size worth while it was surrounded by soldiers with fixed bayonets, and by mounted Uhlans, and marched to the railway-station. Two officers walked beside with whips in their hands—*der Schlag*, the old emblem of the slave-driver, the new of modern Germany. Sometimes as they passed through the streets a woman in tears dodged under the barrier, threw herself on one of the men in the crowd for a last farewell, only to be lashed back by the soldiers.

In the street that led to the station there were others waiting at the windows, waving handkerchiefs to those who were going away. The men in the street marched with heads up, now and then they threw their caps in the air, and they sang as they had sung in the courtyard of the school—to defy the Germans, and perhaps to keep up their own courage in such an hour. At each street corner there would be a little fracas, one of the prisoners would try to run away, but always he would be lashed back into the line by the *Schlag*, or pursued by a Uhlan and prodded back into the ranks with a lance. Some of the men had to pass by their own homes, and they broke from the ranks to seize a child or a wife in a last embrace, to snatch a last kiss; then again the *Schlag* and the lance, and they were back in line, quiet for a little while—then singing again. Finally the column disappeared in the station. No one saw them any more, but there could be heard still coming from the station those shouts of defiance, those songs, "La Brabançonne" and "La Marseillaise." It lasted into the night, then the singing could be heard no more, for suddenly there was the blare of a brass band, the band of one of the regiments, taken there to drown those cries and those patriotic songs under the grotesque gaiety of German military music. Before morning the train had borne them away to Germany.

XXXVI. CHRISTMAS EVE

THE year was dying; the beets had been gathered from the wide lawn at the Orangerie, and it lay a yellow upturned field;

the leafless trees widened the horizon of the sky that hung low and grey over the Low Countries, where the winter days are short and dark, and where the cold rain falls almost incessantly. The Allards had returned to their town house, and the château was closed, left in the care of the concierge and the great savage Groenendael, who barked so fiercely in his kennel under the tower. But still we lingered on there; the Legation had become intolerably depressing. And there is sanity in the country, there is charm in its every mood, even when that mood is melancholy. We looked on the sad countenance of that scene with the consciousness that it was for the last time; we felt that we should not see the spring come to shut us once more within the green of those lofty trees of the noble park and the grass of those lovely slopes. The guns thumped on unremittingly; often in the watches of the night I would listen to their regular throb—like the slow beating of the sad heart of a world that had grown very old and cynical and mean, in an age without illusions or ideals.

There were no more smiles in the once all-radiant city, unless, grotesque touch by which the sardonic spirits must mar even tragedy, they were those of the German soldiers in the Bois playing at hide-and-seek behind the noble beeches.

The press-gang had not come to Brussels yet. The capital, some said, was being reserved until the last, while others thought that it was to be spared entirely, though one versed by experience in the implacable persistence of German intention knew that the visit was only postponed. In fact, as an official whispered to me one day, it was fixed for a date in January. The terror was perhaps no less and the rage had not abated, but they had grown less acute; there was in them that pathetic quality of fatalistic acquiescence, and events that once had inspired indignation passed now almost unnoticed, as when the new *contribution de guerre* was forced on the people by a decree of the Governor-General; * the provincial councils of the provinces of Antwerp, Brabant, Luxembourg, Liége, and Namur having refused to comply with the German order to make the levy.

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* LES CONSEILS PROVINCIAUX

Arrêté du Gouverneur général en Belgique en date du 3 décembre 1916 concernant l'exécution de l'ordre du 20 novembre 1916 imposant une contribution de guerre.

Dans leur session extraordinaire du 2 décembre 1916, les Conseils provinciaux des provinces d'Anvers, de Brabant, de Limbourg, de Liége et de Namur ayant

But there was no diminution in the tales of horror. At Namur, the men who had been seized were herded into cattle-cars and left there, without food or water, in the bitter cold, for a day and a night. Mr. Phil Potter, coming up from the north of France, told me that he with his own eyes had seen sixty *chômeurs* who had refused to work tied to stakes, like the victims of Red Indians, their hands fastened behind them with wires; and they were left there for hours.

At our regular meetings to consider the questions of the *ravitaillement* we discussed little else than the deportations, and we discussed them hopelessly; every day, despite the assurances, despite the cards of exemption that had been issued, we had reports that men connected with the C.N. and the C.R.B. had

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refusé de coopérer au règlement de la contribution de guerre imposée à la population belge par ordre du 20 novembre 1916, et le Conseil provincial de la province de Luxembourg n'y ayant consenti que conditionnellement, les résolutions en question des dits Conseils sont annulées, conformément à l'article 89 de la loi provinciale du 30 avril 1836, parce qu'elles sont contraires à l'intérêt général.

En même temps, les gouverneurs militaires des provinces de Brabant, Limbourg, Liége, Luxembourg et Namur, ainsi que pour la province d'Anvers le gouverneur militaire de la province et le gouverneur de la place forte sont autorisés, de concert avec les présidents compétents des administrations civiles (*Präsidenten der Zivilverwaltungen*), à prendre pour chacune de leurs provinces les mesures désignées ci-après, qui seront obligatoires dans chacune des dites provinces.

(1) Conclure solidairement avec les autres provinces les contrats nécessaires en vue d'assurer pendant six mois le paiement de la contribution de guerre, imposée à la population belge et payable à partir du 10 décembre 1916, et, le cas échéant, contracter dans ce but un emprunt.

(2) Conclure les arrangements nécessaires en vue d'assurer le paiement des intérêts et le remboursement de cet emprunt, ainsi que la couverture des obligations provinciales échéant le 15 janvier 1917 et le paiement des intérêts de l'emprunt de contribution de guerre contracté en décembre 1915.

(3) Faire une démarche auprès de l'administration allemande afin que les sommes nécessaires au paiement des intérêts et à l'amortissement de ces emprunts puissent être prélevées sur le budget belge à titre de subsides communs.

(4) Conclure solidairement avec les autres provinces un emprunt pour couvrir les frais d'intérêts et d'amortissement, s'il n'était pas donné une suite favorable à la démarche mentionnée au chiffre 3.

(5) Signer les documents nécessaires.

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Des arrêtés d'une teneur identique ont été pris l'un à l'égard de la province de la Flandre orientale, l'autre à l'égard de la province du Hainaut, dont les Conseils provinciaux ont, dans leur session du 2 décembre 1916, décidé ce qui suit: Refuser la coopération de la province. Ces deux arrêtés sont signés simultanément par le Gouverneur général en Belgique et le Baron von Falkenhausen, Commandant supérieur de la VIe armée.

Translation

THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

Decree of the Governor-General in Belgium under date December 3, 1916.

been seized, two hundred and fifty of them in the province of Luxembourg alone. Protests were becoming almost ludicrous. And when we were not discussing the seizures of men we were discussing the seizures of cattle and protesting against that, for the illicit traders were running them across the frontier at Welkenraedt with more and more impunity. Our protests finally brought a letter from the Germans promising to put an end to the cattle-running; they even made some arrests, but the practice was never wholly stopped, and our concern merged itself ere long in a larger concern to keep the *ravitaillement* in operation at all. . . .

Bukarest had fallen, the latest disappointment, and, as an evidence of German organization, no sooner was the news

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concerning the execution of the order of November 20, 1916, imposing a contribution of war,

In their extraordinary session of December 2, 1916, the Provincial Councils of the Provinces of Antwerp, of Brabant, of Limbourg, of Liége, and of Namur having refused to co-operate in the settlement of the contribution of war imposed on the Belgian population by the order of November 20, 1916, and the Provincial Council of the Province of Luxembourg having consented to do so only conditionally, the resolutions in that regard of the said Councils are annulled in conformity with article 89 of the Provincial Law of April 30, 1836, because they are contrary to general interest.

At the same time the Military Governors of the Provinces of Brabant, Limbourg, Liége, Luxembourg, and Namur, as well as the Military Governor of the Province of Antwerp and the Governor of the fortified place of Antwerp, are authorized, in accord with the competent Presidents of the Civil Administrations (*Präsidenten der Zivilverwaltungen*), to take, for each one of their provinces, the measures hereinafter designated, which shall be obligatory in each of the said provinces:

(1) To conclude jointly with the other provinces the necessary contracts in order to assure for six months the payment of the contribution of war imposed on the Belgian population and payable after December 10, 1916, and if necessary, to contract loans for the same.

(2) To conclude the necessary arrangements in order to assure the payment of the interest and the reimbursement of this loan, as well as the securities for the provincial obligations, falling due on January 15, 1917, and the payment of the interest on the loan for the contribution of war contracted in December 1915.

(3) To take steps with the German administration so that the sums necessary to pay the interest and the amortization of these loans may be included in the Belgian budget as communal subsidies.

(4) To conclude jointly with the other provinces a loan to cover the expenses of the interest and of the amortization if a favourable action is not taken on the demand mentioned in paragraph (3).

(5) To sign the necessary documents.

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Decrees of a similar tenor have been issued with regard to the province of East Flanders, another with regard to the Province of Hainaut, the Provincial Councils of which have in their session of December 2, 1916, decided as follows: To refuse the co-operation of the province. These two decrees are signed by the Governor-General in Belgium and the Baron von Falkenhausen, Commander-in-Chief of the Sixth Army.

announced than men in Brussels who had interests in the Rumanian oil-fields received orders to report at once their holdings to the German officials.

There was sadness everywhere. I have now in my eyes the vision, evoked by a note in my journal, of a woman, the wife of that barber in the Rue Belliard who had been imprisoned in St.-Gilles for having had in his possession a copy of *L'Illustration*. The man had been a month in prison, he had served his time and she was expecting him home the next day. But she herself had been fined fifty marks, for complicity, I suppose, in the possession of that pictorial journal which brought them perhaps some hint of home, for they were French; that was a grief easily assuaged, and she had gone away, drying her tears; she and the staring, half-developed boy of hers; her husband was coming home on the morrow. She was back the next day; her husband had not been released; instead, she had a note saying that he was to be taken to Germany. Why, or for what, she did not know; there was no charge against him, he had had no hearing; all she knew was that he had been sent away, and had left a note for her, which concluded: "*Courage, et pas de larmes!*"

But there were tears a plenty, soiling the thin face that was twitching in anguish as she sat there in the hall of the Legation, her dumb, half-witted boy with her, the child who stared and stared at a life he could not understand, and perhaps was less miserable so.

"*Ayez la grâce, Excellence,*" the woman said over and over, "*de faire quelque chose pour mon mari!*"

She sat there not knowing what to do, only one of the long train of poor innocent victims of German ruthlessness that had passed through those corridors during those years. She sat quietly weeping, yet giving after all so much more than she could take away, in the story she told me of the kindness and helpfulness that one finds everywhere among the poor. The day before, during her absence from the rooms she rented, the German *Polizei* had been there to collect the fine of fifty marks, and as she was gone they began to tear up the rooms and to remove the few miserable sticks of furniture. The landlord had pleaded and protested, but, of course, in vain. There was a girl who had a room in the house, a singer in the cheap concert-halls, and she, by scraping together all she had, produced the fifty marks. It

took her last sou, but the insatiable *Polizei* were paid, and the furniture was left. I tried to have the barber released and brought back to Brussels, but the only reply I had from the authorities was that "a trip to Germany would do him good" (*"Un voyage en Allemagne lui fera du bien"*). Later I heard the reason for his deportation; German officers now and then frequented the shop where he was employed. He was French and he made remarks. *"C'est un blagueur,"* it was explained to me. And I understood—those German officers and *la blague française.*

The one bit of good news was in the word I had had from Mr. Hoover in London to the reassuring effect that the British Government would not put an end to the *ravitaillement* because of the deportations. "We have weathered that storm," he wrote, and the time seemed to be auspicious to attempt to produce some amelioration, and to have sent back to Belgium those who were not *chômeurs.* The President had sent to Berlin a protest against the impressing of working men in Belgium, expressing the deep interest the American Government took in the Belgian civil population, and, by some unusual liberality, this protest was allowed to appear in the newspapers at Brussels,* with the response of the General Government.

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* A translation of the article on the President's note is as follows:

THE TRANSFER OF THE "CHÔMEURS"

THE NOTE OF THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY'S ANSWER

BERLIN, *December* 11.

The *Gazette de l'Allemagne du Nord* publishes the text of the communication sent by the Government of the United States to Berlin regarding the transportation of Belgian workmen to Germany:

"The Government of the United States has learned with distress and with great regret the decision taken by the German Government to force a part of the Belgian civil population to work in Germany. It feels that it must protest in a spirit of friendship, but in the most solemn manner, against such a procedure, which is in contradiction to all tradition and to the principles of humanity which are the foundation of international usage and which are followed at all times by civilized nations in the treatment of non-combatants in occupied territories. The Government of the United States is convinced that the effects of such a policy, if continued, will in all probability be prejudicial to the work, conceived in a spirit of humanity, which has for its object the assistance of the Belgians—a result that would be universally regretted and that might place the German Government in an embarrassing situation."

A response to this note, which was sent to the United States, is given herewith:

"The Government of the United States has protested against the transfer to Germany of Belgian workmen, and the obligation imposed upon them of working there, and is of the opinion that such measures are not reconcilable with the principles of humanity and of international usage in the treatment of

With this as a basis, and considering the conversation I had had with the Baron von der Lancken in which he had said that the authorities would redress any "injustices," as the deportation of those who were not *chômeurs* seemed to be considered even in the German mind, we thought to organize a bureau where requests for repatriation might be filed by the families of those deported; where there seemed to be some reason that might appeal to the authorities, these were to be forwarded to the Governor-General in the hope that some of them at least might be rescued from the slave-compounds in Germany and brought back home. Thousands of requests for such action had come to the Legation and we had been at a loss what to do with them; thousands, doubtless the same thousands, had been sent to the Spanish and to the Dutch Legations and to the Nunciature,

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the population in an occupied territory. The German Government feels that the Government of the United States is not sufficiently informed as to the motive for, and the manner of execution of, this measure, and for this reason it finds it necessary to set forth the actual state of affairs.

"For a long time scarcity of work has prevailed in Belgium to an alarming extent, to the detriment of the industrial workers. The increase in the number of unemployed men there is due to the English blockade, which prevents Belgian industries from importing materials necessary for manufacturing and from exporting manufactured articles, and it is likewise due to this blockade that the cultivation of the land has ceased to a large extent.

"All means of gaining a livelihood having been taken away from nearly half of the Belgian factory workers, of whom the total number is about 1,200,000, it has been necessary for over half a million Belgians who formerly earned their living in industrial enterprises to seek public assistance. If one includes the families of the workmen the number is increased threefold—one and one-half million persons, in round numbers. Both from the point of view of Belgian political economy, upon which the unemployed workmen impose an intolerable burden, and from that of order and public morals, the menace of a general cessation of labour, with its consequences, became very grave, and it was necessary to take radical steps to put an end to such a condition. This necessity had been for a long time recognized and talked about by clear-thinking Belgians.

"It was under these conditions that the Governor-General at Brussels issued a decree on May 15, 1916, threatening with imprisonment or forced labour all persons who, while receiving public assistance without sufficient reason, refused to accept employment or continue to work according to their abilities. On account of the cessation of industry in Belgium it has not been found possible to employ all those who were out of work or to find suitable occupations for them. There remained only the alternative of finding work for them in Germany, where already a large number of Belgian workmen had voluntarily sought employment, and where they were perfectly contented because of the high pay they received and the liberty of movement that was accorded them.

"To the *chômeurs* who refused to follow their example the obligation to work has been presented. This measure conforms in every way to international law, for according to Article 43 of the Convention of The Hague relative to war on land, it devolves upon the occupying Power to maintain order in the occupied territories, and the right is conferred upon it to take the measures necessary to this end in case the laws of the country are not adequate. Now

and working thus separately I felt that we should be at cross-purposes, and that by the consequent duplication of demands the very end of the work might be frustrated. I undertook then to have the three Legations act in concert, and to establish one bureau, where all the requests might be sorted out by clerks and acted upon, but I failed, and there was a Spanish bureau and a Dutch bureau and other bureaux under other neutral flags. We organized a bureau of our own, and the requests were so numerous that I had to rent a house across the street from the Legation and install there a corps of clerks. There were no means of publicity in Belgium, as I trust I have shown, but the news spread and the requests came pouring in, and we did what we could, though the effort proved very ineffective.

Baron von der Lancken had returned from Berlin with the

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without any doubt the maintenance of public order demands that every measure possible be taken to prevent those persons capable of working from becoming public charges, that idleness should not make of them a veritable plague for the country, and that they should be made to work.

"In everything concerning the execution of this measure the procedure has been without severity, and all possible respect has been shown for those concerned. If mistakes have been made in isolated cases in sending persons to Germany, notably in including persons to whom the conditions mentioned in the decree of May 15, 1916, are not applicable, this must be attributed to the fact that a number of the Belgian authorities have refused to lend their assistance in preparing the lists of *chômeurs* or have furnished inexact information. Measures have been taken to remedy errors of this sort as promptly as possible. A careful watch is being kept to see that only those persons are being sent to Germany who are receiving public assistance, and who, not finding work in Belgium, refuse that which is offered to them in Germany. The unemployed transferred to Germany are sent to points of concentration established at Alten Grabow, Guben, Cassel, Meschede, Münster, Soldau, and Wittenberg, near the regions where there is work for them, whether it be in agricultural or in industrial enterprises. The classes of labour in which an enemy population cannot be forced to work, by virtue of the rights of people, are evidently here excluded.

"If the American Government considers it worth while, a delegate from its Embassy at Berlin will be authorized to examine, by a personal visit, the condition of the persons concerned. The German Government infinitely regrets that owing to the misrepresentations in the enemy Press the situation has been so completely distorted in the United States. At the same time it regrets, especially in the interest of the Belgian population, that these misrepresentations should prejudice in any manner the beneficial work of the Relief Commission.

"And finally, the German Government cannot restrain itself from drawing attention to the fact that the transfer of the German population in places outside of Germany and in its colonies occupied by enemy troops, notably the evacuation of women, children, and aged persons from Prussian colonies in Siberia, has not inspired the neutral States, as far as it knows, with the idea of taking toward the Government concerned steps similar to those actually taken toward the German Government. There cannot be the slightest doubt that these measures constitute a gross violation of the laws of humanity and of the rights of people, while the measures explained above which have been taken by Germany conform absolutely to these principles."

news that at last it had been decided, in principle, that the English women might leave Belgium, but that the matter yet waited the approval of Hindenburg, a bit of information that was not reassuring, for with the eclipse of Von Bissing—whose reported opposition to the slave-drive won him no credit in Brussels, since men everywhere said that if he was opposed to it he should have resigned when his objection was overruled—it showed that the German *Reiters* were indeed in the saddle.

Von Bissing himself was very ill, and his wife had been sent for. M. Francqui had gone to Paris by way of Switzerland, spending ten days in quarantine at Frankfort. At the same time Villalobar went to Berlin for a day or two, and then on to Paris and Madrid, and the rumour of peace spread abroad again. Peace was often talked of in Brussels, and more than once it was intimated that the Germans were disposed to restore Belgium, which they were merely holding, it would be explained, as a "pawn"; and the fact that the pawn had been stolen did not, in the view of the pawn-holder, seem in the least to affect his title to it. All that the Germans desired, they would generously hint, was a "guarantee"—though what that guarantee was, was not very clear; they wished, they said, to be assured against any further attacks from Belgium, and to be certain that Belgium would resume trade relations with them after the war.

Such rumours spread whenever Villalobar left the occupied territory, and were not to be taken much more seriously than other rumours that circulated so prodigiously in the darkness of little Belgium, but late in that month of darkness an event occurred that created something more than a rumour. Christmas was coming on, the season when men's thoughts turned instinctively and of old habit to peace, though the only reason we in Brussels had for being reminded of Christmas was the fact that parties of German soldiers were cutting out fir-trees in the Forêt with which to celebrate the festival that for some odd, satirical reason seemed to mean so much to them about their camp-fires.

If peace was not in men's hearts it was in their mouths at least, for in the middle of the month the German Chancellor made his peace speech in the Reichstag; it was called a peace speech by the Germans, though it was not a peaceful speech, and was couched in such terms and expressed so much in the usual bellicose German tone that it produced everywhere else in the

world a very warlike effect. It was the last, almost desperate effort of the Chancellor to save his Government, then tottering to its fall, from the hands of the military party, but like every other German pronouncement, it was rated in Belgium as but one more piece of insincerity and hypocrisy. In the German camp, however, it was received, like all such pronouncements from on high, as though it were from Mount Sinai itself; the soldiers supposed that, as the War Lord could declare war, so, when wearied of it, he could decree peace. And down on the front in Northern France there was an instant celebration of the joyous news. Mr. Prentiss Gray, of the C.R.B., just then back from a visit to Valenciennes, told me of the enthusiastic scenes that had been produced when the Emperor's announcement was read at the head of two hundred thousand troops; the soldiers cheered frantically, and that night the officers had a great banquet that lasted until four o'clock in the morning, and around the board, in the rich *bourgogne* of all the neighbouring châteaux, the officers toasted peace, and, the night following, they had another drinking bout to fête a report that President Poincaré had been assassinated.

In Brussels, at La Monnaie, *Parsifal* was being sung by the Stuttgart Company, and, as though to bring in an era of good feeling, the Germans were publishing in *Le Bruxellois* what purported to be letters from *chômeurs* in Germany, telling what a happy time they were having there. No one believed for a moment in the authenticity of these letters, or in their sincerity; they, the people said, were merely scraps of paper of another kind, either fabricated by the Germans or wrung by some sort of blackmail from those confined in the slave-compounds in Germany. But there are other cards and letters written from Germany that I know are genuine, and all the more remarkable, for they were submitted to and passed by the German censor. Even their guarded terms show what the men were suffering; the frequent reference to the presence of "Monsieur G. Fein" seems not to have been seized by the dull minds of the German guards in all its importance as a cryptic allusion to the hunger from which they were all suffering, "G. Fein" being merely a phonetic way of writing the French "*j'ai faim.*" *

GUBEN, *le* 6.1.1917.

* CHÉRE ÉPOUSE ET CHER FILS,—Je vous écris ces quelques mots pour vous

The people's thoughts were not, therefore, very long distracted by the talk of peace from the absorbing actuality of those deeds by which Belgians were everywhere being carried off into slavery. But on the evening of December 22 a little note in the *Belgische*

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faire savoir que je suis toujours en bonne santé et que la présente vous trouvera de même. J'ai été un peu malade mais maintenant ça va un peu mieux encore bien que j'aie eu deux bons camarades Émile Hans et Louis Morel qui m'ont donné un peu de manger car on a l'estomac beaucoup restreint et on est bien faible. J'ai demandé pour avoir 3 petits colis par express je crois que vous avez fait le nécessaire ; je les attends avec impatience et s'il n'y a pas de changement tâchez d'en faire autant toutes les semaines. Ne faites pas de dépenses inutiles je serai déjà content d'avoir un peu de riz et de sucre même du grispe car ici c'est la soupe du soir le grispe ; mais je crois que ça ne durera plus longtemps il faudra du changement à cela.

Notre camarade Léon Balérieux a écrit à Monsieur Istace pour un groupe de camarades avec moi je vous dirai cela plus tard. Maintenant ça me semble bien drôle de ne pas recevoir de vos nouvelles ; je n'ai encore reçu une lettre de vous et une carte de votre frère Aimé ; de ma sœur encore rien et j'avais écrit en même temps que pour votre première lettre. Je crois qu'on ne sait pas que je suis venu à Guben. J'espère bien maintenant que notre petit se porte toujours bien et qu'il est bien sage ; surtout qu'il n'oublie pas d'aller à l'école car on n'en sait jamais trop. Je crois aussi que vous avez toujours pour vivre et que Monsieur Istace continue l'affaire entreprise. Je voudrais si bien le savoir car je serai encore mieux résigné à mon sort si elle réussit. Vous pourriez encore demander à Monsieur Brachet pour avoir un costume pour moi car le mien est dans un état lamentable ; il faut coucher tout habillé ici ; j'ai même deux caleçons sur moi et deux pantalons et deux chemises et j'ai encore froid. Le froid et la faim c'est quelque chose. Mais je prends tout de même courage. Faites aussi la même chose ; seulement tâchez de prendre tout votre ravitaillement et aussi des navets et choux-navets si vous le pouvez car il faudra bien tout pour me rassasier et me remettre un peu sur forme. Je n'ai plus rien à dire pour le moment que des compliments à toute la famille et au camarade. Je finis en vous embrassant tous les deux de loin.

FERNAND ARNOULD.

GUBEN, *le* 4.1.17.

CHER SŒUR,—Je réponds à votre carte pour vous dire que nous sommes toujours en bonne santé tous d'Hameau. Le temps nous semble bien très long aussi j'ai déjà pleuré beaucoup aussi au départ du train je n'ai plus vu que le vieux Adolphe. Vous dites que je ne me laisse rien manquer ; tout me manque avec de l'argent on n'a rien. Je tiendrai toujours à ma promesse car j'ai une tête et une bonne. Je vois Florestan un peu au matin ; j'en ai pour deux minutes à lui parler. René fait ses adresses comme les miennes. Envoyez-moi un colis le plus tôt possible car j'en ai grand besoin. À mon retour vous pouvez bien apprêter du manger à volonté car ici j'ai faim je ne mange que du pain sec et de la soupe comme de l'eau. Je suis toujours malade de faim et de froid. J'espère bien quand je retournerai que je dormirai bien car ici je n'ai pas encore dormi une heure comme il faut et le lit est bien dur et les petites bêtes sont bien méchantes. Quelle triste vie que nous passons pourtant nous n'avons rien fait à personne pour subir une punition pareille. Nous espérons que ça ira mieux plus tard. Faites des compliments à tante Valentine les deux Renelles et Valentine ainsi qu'à Numa Tourbe Jules Laurent au Binchoux à Parrain et Marraine et tous mes parents et tous mes camarades.

Chère sœur en attendant je vous souhaite une bonne et heureuse année à vous tous de très loin en attendant de près. Donc ne manquez pas de m'envoyer un colis et dites qu'on en envoie un à René aussi Louis Raoul Alexandre vous

Kurrier, a newspaper in the German language then published in Brussels, announced that the President had sent a joint Note to the Powers extending his good offices. It had been for me one of those hard days on which the early twilight closed a gloomy curtain;

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remettrez ses compliments aussi. Chère sœur ne trouvant plus rien à vous dire je finis ma carte en vous embrassant.

Votre frère qui vous aime,

À bientôt. GERMAIN CARLIER.

GUBEN, *le* 19.12.1916.

CHÈRE FEMME,—J'ai reçu votre lettre le lundi 18 au soir. J'ai été content de recevoir le colis de tabac mais encore plus content avec la lettre. Jusque maintenant c'est encore la même chose; je suis toujours à Guben avec mes deux mains dans mes poches et je fume la cigarette. Je n'ai pas encore vu Aimé maman ni Alfred Briand. Je voudrais bien avoir un colis avec du riz du sucre du chocolat et du sel parce que les produits farineux ne sont pas acceptés Le petit Nestor est à la barraque 6 et moi à la barraque 8 avec Sibille Edouard et Vanderest Arthur et encore beaucoup d'autres. Dites à Jules Bohême que je ne peux pas lui envoyer une carte; on ne peut envoyer qu'à ses parents comme vous vous allez souvent coudre j'ai calculé de les envoyer à votre maison

On vend les " sorêts " un mark, les harengs un mark, les allumettes une petite boîte 35 pfennigs; 10 cigarettes 40 pfennigs; c'est beaucoup trop.

J'espère vous revoir bientôt.

Ne laissez rien manquer à Marraine.

En attendant des compliments à toute la famille.

Votre mari,
WINS FLORIAN.

le 7.1.1917.

CHER FRÈRE,—Je vous écris ces quelques mots pour vous faire savoir que je suis toujours en bonne santé et j'espère que vous êtes de même. Seulement cher frère je vous dirai que je suis un peu gêné pour le manger donc si vous aurie le bon cœur de faire votre possible pour m'envoyer un petit colis vous me ferie grand plaisir. Vous tâcherez de parler à votre chef d'équipe pour le faire envoyer; ça pourrait marcher plus vite. Surtout n'oubliez pas de ne mettre que 350 grammes et de le mettre par express. Je pourrais vous le rembourser après la guerre. Donc, cher frère, en attendant de vos nouvelles je vous embrasse de loin. Vous remettrez des compliments à votre femme, cher frère, si vous auriez la bonne volonté de remettre des compliments à ma femme et à mes enfants et de dire à ma femme que s'il y avait moyen de mettre mes colis par votre chef ça pourrait me faire plaisir. Vous direz à Hubert que s'il pourrait faire la même chose que vous autres qu'il me ferait plaisir. Vous direz à ma sœur Marie que ses enfants ont reçu leur colis et de lui demander comment elle a fait pour leur envoyer et de faire le même. Vous ferez des compliments à mon frère Fernand et à ma sœur Alice que s'il pourrait m'envoyer un petit colis qu'il me ferait plaisir que je le rembourserai à mon retour. Cher frère, je vous dirai que mon compagnon de lit Nicaise a déjà reçu des colis de ses parents vous n'avez que de leur demander comment ils ont fait; en attendant de vous revoir je vous embrasse de loin.

NICAISE ET BARBIER.

GUBEN, *le* 19.12.1916.

MES CHERS PARENTS,—Je vous écris encore ces quatre mots pour vous faire savoir que nous sommes encore en bonne santé; j'espère vous trouver de même dans quelques jours. Mes chers parents je vous fais savoir que j'ai reçu le petit paquet le 18 au soir après 8 heures. J'avais faim; j'en ai fait un peu pour

there had been a long session to discuss the *ravitaillement*, with its interminable complications; terrible stories of the sufferings of the *chômeurs*; one woman to ask me to intercede for her

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me soutenir. Octave m'a dit hier soir aussi qu'il n'avait encore rien reçu et qu'il avait encore envoyé quatre cartes jeudi le 14 et il m'a dit si les colis n'étaient pas encore mis en route qu'il ne fallait pas les mettre parce que nous retournerons bientôt. Faites toujours des compliments à toute la famille ainsi à tous mes camarades. Prenons courage; nous vous souhaiterons une bonne année à Charleroy. Chers parents le frère de Pierre est aussi auprès de moi. Je l'ai vu seulement le dimanche; nous nous sommes parlé un peu et il fait des compliments et dites à Fernand que j'irai bientôt au ses avec lui ainsi qu'il remette de mes nouvelles à ma bonne amie et courage à bientôt j'ai le souvenir au revoir à bientôt. Attendez un peu nous suivrons notre nouvelle.

Vos deux fils pour la vie,

O. ET F.

CUBENNE, *le 14 décembre* 1916.

CHÈRE FEMME ET CHER PETIT,—Je vous écris cette carte pour vous demander un petit colis. Dans le colis mettez un peu de sucre un peu de biscuit militaire. Allez à Châtelet faire des compliments, demandez à Ida de mettre un peu de sucre en morceaux et un peu de biscuit militaire. Dites à Ida que çà me ferait plaisir; allez trouver Madame Colot demandez-lui pour avoir un peu de sucre. Faites des compliments à Maria pour Clément Huest. Faites des compliments à Louisa et à Auguste. Dites-leur que je ne voudrais pas qu'il vienne. Fernand si vous n'écoutez pas votre maman je vous corrigerai quand je serai de retour. Et Gustave aussi. Faites des compliments à Madame Colot pour moi. Chère femme et chers petits enfants, envoyez l'adresse Jeanne aussi embrasse les trois petits pour moi aussi que vous aussi. J'espère aller manger les galettes.

Envoyez-moi du tabac à chiquer car il est cher ici. Je vous embrasse bien fort tous les quatre. Au revoir.

FRANÇOIS LIGOT.

GUBEN, *le 8 janvier* 1917.

MA CHÈRE FEMME,—J'ai reçu le deuxième colis de tabac samedi dernier, il me semble que vous m'oubliez un peu je ne reçois plus aucune nouvelle. Écrivez-moi par express cela arrive plus sûrement. Envoye aussi par express si possible et comme échantillon sans valeur une boîte avec quelques tartines rôties dont je vous parle déjà dans mes cartes précédentes. J'espère que mon père est toujours en bonne santé et qu'il prend patience. Dites-lui que je l'embrasse de tout cœur et que je compte rentrer bientôt car il me semble que mon temps diminue ici l'on s'ennuie à en mourir ici surtout sans nouvelles du pays. Si vous pouvez m'expédier un colis tâchez d'y joindre un pot de confiture aussi.

Enfin ma chère femme que te dirais-je de plus? Il faudrait être ensemble pour se conter les petites misères de la vie. . . . Prenez bien soin de consoler mon cher père de votre mieux afin qu'à mon retour je le retrouve en bonne santé comme je l'ai laissé à mon départ.

Je termine en vous embrassant bien affectueusement ainsi que mon cher père.

Des compliments à toute la famille et à tous les amis.

Ton mari pour la vie,

FERDINAND DOKIR.

Remettez mes amitiés et mes souhaits à Marie à Polydore et qu'ils pensent à moi et tâchent de m'envoyer aussi quelques tartines roties aussi car vous pensez si j'ai . . .

Embrassez la petite Marie pour moi. J'ai eu une malchance ma chère femme l'on m'a volé mes bottines la semaine dernière de sorte que je n'ai plus que mes sabots à moitié usés, il ne faut pas m'en envoyer pour cela c'est inutile de plus

husband, just transported to Germany as "undesirable"; another just returned from prison in Hasselt to tell me of her experiences there—the cruelty of one German nurse who seemed

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l'on m'a pris tout mon argent au bureau de la sorte que je suis propre. Vous pouvez faire un beau gâteau pour quand je retournerai encore qu'il serait mois je le mangerais bien tout.

Faites des compliments et des amitiés chez Falize au Canal. Nous sommes ensemble depuis quelque temps et dites qu'il ne reçoit rien non plus; il fait dire de bien soigner les lapins de bien les groissir car à son retour . . .

Bien des compliments à ma sœur Juliette et ainsi qu'au boucher.

GUBEN, *le* .12.16.

CHERS PARENTS,—Je suis toujours en excellente santé. Nous espérons toujours retourner d'un jour à l'autre. Un bruit circule dans notre baraque que pour la 1re quinzaine de janvier nous serions rentrés.

Chers parents, je suis bien triste je ne reçois plus rien du tout. Tante Alice ne m'a pas encore écrit et mon camarade François Bernard qui reçoit des colis sur colis. Si notre espoir de retour échouait encore envoyez moi des colis sur colis dans des boîtes de fer avec ces numéros 56–3058 baraque 4, par express.

J'espère, chers parents, que vous aurez reçu ma carte de souhaits et n'oubliez pas non plus mes professeurs qui j'espère ne me feront pas perdre une année car aussitôt rentré je travaillerai comme un acharné.

Chers parents, ne vous faites pas trop de peine car ce serait encore plus triste pour moi quand je rentrerai de vous trouver malades.

Des compliments à toute la famille et à mes camarades.

P.S.—Pour mes colis demandez l'adresse à Maria Bernard ou faites les parvenir par un officier qui va chez Ernest Depasse: du riz, du café et chicorée mélange, des bonbons, du tabac, du pain rôti, du sucre blanc et du fin rouge, de gros haricots.

LÉON BAUDOUX.

Mettez sur les colis le nom de l'expéditeur avec ces numéros 56–3058, 31 division. Envoyez, ne vous retenez pas pour personne.

GUBEN, *le* 25 *décembre* 1916 (*Noël*).

CHERS PARENTS,—Je vous écris ces quelques mots pour vous laisser savoir que voilà un mois que nous sommes partis de Monceau avec regret de ne pas avoir vu mon cher père. Donc au jour que j'envoie ma lettre la nouvelle année sera bientôt venue. Donc, cher père et chère mère, c'est pour vous souhaiter une bonne et heureuse et meilleure, et une bonne santé pendant toute l'année mil neuf cent dix-sept, ainsi qu'à Pierre et Jean et aussi à Julia et Émile, Jemir et Edouard Armand et Émilia Calix et sa femme, à la famille Cherton, à Gille et Debroux Wayelle, à Émile Célina et Arthur Marie et Liévin et Louis Abel, et à tous les connaissances et camarades des alentours. Maintenant à part cela je pense que vous êtes tous en bonne santé depuis mon départ, ainsi que toutes les bêtes de la maison, parce que moi je suis toujours en bonne santé ainsi que mes camarades.

Aussitôt que aurez reçu ma lettre envoyez les nouvelles de ce côté-là et racontez un peu comment l'affaire du pain va. À mon oncle j'ai envoyé une carte en cas de non reçu; remettez lui mes souhaits ainsi qu'à ma tante et cousin. Nous sommes toujours au camp et nous espérons retourner bientôt. Est-ce que le vieux papa Pierre a toujours tant de mal avec sa ménagerie moutonne.

La Noël se passe tristement ici. Monsieur Florestan est souvent absent ainsi que Baudrenghien.

Si vous pouvez envoyer un colis envoyez le plus tôt possible. Biscuit chocolat.

Maintenant j'espère que mon cher père est déjà remis à la maison depuis son retour du Stranval. Et j'espère que je le verrai bientôt car je pleure souvent

to take a malign pleasure in announcing to women that their husbands were to be shot, the kindness of another German nurse who helped her in many ways, the sound of the firing-squad in

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dans mon lit en pensant que suis parti sans le revoir et embrasser une fois. Ici la soupe au poisson est bonne. Donc encore une fois je vous souhaite une bonne et heureuse et meilleure année et une bonne santé pendant l'année 1917, ainsi qu'à Pierre et Jean et camarades.

Votre fils qui vous aime qui vous embrasse de loin,

LÉON WULLAERT.

GUBEN, *le* 7.1.17.

CHÈRE MÈRE ET FRÈRE ET SŒURS,—Je réponds à votre carte que j'ai reçue avec plaisir et je suis content d'avoir reçu de vos nouvelles, espérant que vous êtes toujours en bonne santé ainsi que moi de même. Je vous ferai bien savoir que celui qui a fait la carte que j'ai reçue est bien instruit car il oublie la date et de mettre l'adresse et de serrer un peu les lignes pour mettre un peu plus sur la carte et de faire au crayon pour que ça soit plus propre. Je vous ferai savoir que vous autres renonce sur le manger et que moi ici je n'ai pour tout repas qu'on nous donne, un bon pour tout, et s'il aurait moyen de m'envoyer deux petits colis par express, un de ma mère et un de mon frère, çà me ferait bien plaisir, et faites savoir à ma tante Laurence d'envoyer à mon oncle Émile des colis par express aussi.

Je finis ma carte en vous embrassant bien fort et faites des compliments à Adolphe et Robert de la part de Grégoire et aussi à la famille de Fernand et Laurence; ainsi à Victorien, et dites à Victorien de bien travailler ma terre qu'il m'avait promis, car je vais planter les pommes de terre, et dites-moi si Carnière et Anderlue sont rentrés et faites-le moi savoir le plus tôt possible.

Votre fils pour la vie, OSCAR ROMAIN.

GUBEN, *le* 13.12.16.

CHERS PARENTS,—Je suis très étonné de ne point recevoir de vos nouvelles qui me feraient tant plaisir.

Je suis à Guben toujours en bonne santé, beaucoup meilleure encore si je pouvais recevoir des caissettes. (Chocolat. . . .) J'ai fait ces jours-ci la connaissance d'un fort copain, G. Feint, qui m'a donné de vos nouvelles.

J'ai écrit de ces jours-ci à M. Escole et à Georges Dupuis.

Je suis toujours en compagnie de plusieurs amis, Besson René, Blamart, Gaston Yernaux, Georges et Léon Mal et Raymond Brasseur, le frère à Cousine Sidonie. Léon Turf et Jules Lejeune est aussi parmi nous.

Notre temps se passe à jouer aux cartes et à s'enrager car le temps semble long. Alfred va-t-il toujours à l'école? Nelly est-elle toujours en bonne santé et pense-t-elle souvent à moi? Papa a-t-il toujours de la besogne? Fait-il cher vivre? Je voudrais avoir des nouvelles de Parrain et Marraine, de mon oncle J. Bte. et d'Evrard ainsi que de toute la famille car la place diminue. Georges et notre petit Maurice sont-ils encore aussi espiègles et aussi vivants? Ne sachant en mettre davantage j'attends de vos nouvelles avec impatience car de mes amis en ont déjà reçu. Bien des amitiés à tous mes amis et amies. En attendant de vous revoir tous, recevez de votre fils ses meilleurs baisers. Pensez à moi.

RENÉ RASQUINET.

le 3.1.1917.

CHERS PARENTS,—Je vous écris afin de vous faire savoir que je suis toujours à Guben avec mes amis de Hameau en très bonne santé. Le jour de l'an ne fut pas fort gai cette année pour moi ni pour vous autres, mais j'espère vous revoir bientôt, il fait très mauvais au moment où je vous écrit et je vous l'assure

the early morning—" *un coup, net,*" she said, with a quick horizontal gesture of her black-gloved hand, and another life gone; and the awful music of two thousand men singing " The Lion of

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que par ce temps il ne fait pas bon pour attendre son plat de soupe, car nous sommes toujours à environ dix mille hommes dans le camp. J'espère que mon lit m'attend avec impatience car celui que nous avons pour le moment est très dur mais très commode car on se couche tout habillé pour ne pas avoir froid et pour les petites bêtes, malgré cela on y reste au moins douze heures afin d'oublier où l'on est. Je suis toujours très bien portant mais on est très faible car la nourriture se compose de soupe à l'orge du cripse, ou de celle à carottes ou à choux-navets très souvent claire comme de l'eau. Depuis quelque temps nous recevons de très bonnes nouvelles; on nous dit que beaucoup de nos amis sont déjà rentrés tels que Mons et Anderlues, on nous a même dit que des affiches étaient collées à Jumet que notre retour se ferait pour le cinq ou le huit, donc j'espère que vous le ferez savoir. Je crois que chez vous tout va très bien et qu'à notre retour à la maison il y aura de bonne nourriture afin de nous soigner, et de la farine pour faire une bonne soupe au lait ou des bonnes couques de Suisse, car j'espère me reposer au moins un mois; mes beaux habits sont toujours dans le sac, mais que voulez-vous, il fait si sale que l'on enfonce dans la boue du matin au soir. J'ai oublié de vous dire que le matin nous recevons un morceau de pain de deux cents grammes pour la journée. À notre retour nous supposons recevoir à la commune des vivres et même de l'argent pour ce qu'on a détruit afin de nous remettre. Donc comme vous le voyez on espère un retour très proche dans la famille.

Remerciez ma Tante des bonnes galettes qu'elle m'a données à mon départ et que bientôt je recevrai encore, donc des compliments à toute la famille et à tous mes amis; dites à Fernand que nous irons bientôt ensemble et à Victor, des compliments à Maurice et à Louis et à Auguste André, encore chez Grabouilat dont j'espère en bonne santé. Faites savoir aussi chez Védastine et Valentine et ailleurs que la nouvelle année s'est bien passée; dites à mon père qu'il dise à Monsieur Bodart et à son fils que je leur souhaite une bonne année et d'être bientôt ensemble. J'espère que les Delaize sont toujours bien portants et mon ami Émile Delaize dont il y a si longtemps que je l'ai vu. Donc, chers parents, s'il vaut encore la peine d'envoyer un colis vous expédierez par express un kilo de pain d'épices, informez-vous.

En attendant de vous revoir et dont j'espère bientôt je reste votre fils.

DUPUIS RAOUL.

GUBEN, *le* 4.1.1917.

MA CHÈRE EMMA,—Je suis toujours en bonne santé et j'espère bien que ma petite lettre vous trouvera tout à fait rétablie de votre rhume que vous avez eu.

Ma chère Emma, voilà la 7e fois que je vous écris et au moins 5 fois à Clara et je n'ai encore reçu que votre lettre et une de Clara et une carte de Paul; cependant j'écris toutes les fois que je peux parce que les timbres font défaut. Je vous dirai que le temps me semble bien long et triste de ne rien recevoir sur autant de fois que j'ai écrit; si vous ne recevez pas de mes nouvelles informez-vous et vous pourriez peut-être m'écrire plus souvent. Je relis votre lettre plus de vingt fois par jour en attendant d'en recevoir une 2e fois. Vous devez comprendre comme le temps me semble long vu que l'on n'a rien à faire sauf de faire un peu de lessive et raccommoder ses bas, entre temps boire et manger et dormir et se promener dans la cour; depuis que je suis entré au camp je n'ai encore vu aucune personne de Guben; donc je ne saurais vous dire s'ils sont beaux ou laids; vous voyez quel plaisir que j'ai.

Ma chère Emma, depuis le 6 décembre j'ai demandé un colis à Clara et quand j'ai reçu votre le 23 vous me dites que vous n'avez encore rien reçu de moi; c'est bien malheureux parce que je voudrais recevoir du cacao et du sucre et de la

Flanders"—*chômeurs en route* to Germany. Then the *Kurrier*, with its announcement, as I said; a thrill of new life ran through the town; had the day come at last when the world could awake from its long nightmare? Dared one hope?

The President's Note, though not the full text of it, was published in the Brussels newspapers the next day. One had to be wary of translations—*traduttore, traditore*—but the following day we had the full text of the noble document that was already beginning to suffer from that misunderstanding which was to be its fate, the fate for a while of the pronouncements of all great statesmen of vision who look beyond the present hour.

And yet its influences and its hope lingered in the heart that Christmas Eve. The cold had suddenly abated; it had been a mild, sunny day, and before tea my wife and I took the dogs and went for a cross-country walk over the fields behind Uccle,

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confiture ou du saindoux vu que le pain ne me semble pas bon; depuis que j'ai quitté Monceau je n'ai pas encore bu de café, mais prenons patience, comme je crois bientôt retourner on peut l'apprêter et le beurre aussi. Ma chère Emma, quand on a un peu de ravitaillement d'avance on doit se promener avec dans sa poche; si on l'oublie dans son sac souvent on ne le retrouve plus quand on arrive.

Emma, je finis car je ne saurais rien vous dire d'autre.

En attendant de vous revoir bientôt, faites des grands compliments chez vous et à Madame ainsi qu'à mes amis.

Recevez de votre cher Désiré tout son amour ainsi que ses baisers.

Votre cher DÉSIRÉ qui vous aime de loin comme de près.

1000 baisers. À bientôt j'espère.

GUBEN, *le* 2.1.17.

CHERS PARENTS,—Je vous écris ces quelques mots pour vous faire savoir que je ne suis pas fort content ainsi que Joseph et Norbert; voilà que depuis le 21 nous n'avons pas encore reçu de vos nouvelles ainsi qu'Élise; le temps ne nous semble pas encore long assez comme ça il faut encore nous passer des nouvelles de la maison; moi ici, voilà que j'ai déjà écrit cinq fois et les timbres font encore défaut, mais vous ce n'est pas la même chose, vous avez tout sous la main. Chers parents, je croyais être de retour pour la nouvelle année mais je viens que c'est tous canards. Maintenant écoutez-moi bien, si entendez des incides sérieux, vous entendez bien, sérieux, du retour des internés civils dites-le moi et si vous n'avez encore rien entendu n'est-ce pas, eh bien, je vous le répète encore vous pouvez bien nous envoyer toutes les semaines du riz et de la farine de maïs et du sucre à nous trois ou bien encore du pain et des biscuits militaires, car ici, chers parents, on crève la faim, et envoyez tout colis lettres par express, ça coûte quelques centimes de plus mais sur trois quatre jours nous les aurons. Maintenant dites-moi si Joseph travaille et s'il a déjà fini le coin de terre, car moi quand je serai de retour j'en aurai au moins pour quinze jours pour me rétablir.

Je finis ma carte en vous embrassant bien fort tous ainsi qu'Élise et les enfants. Dites un peu à Charles Dereuck que son fils réclame du tabac et du riz et du sucre.

HENRY CLODION.

by the mill and down the avenue of tall poplars to lovely Droogenbosche. . . . In a distant field there was a shepherd and a flock of sheep, their fleece touched to silver by the slanting rays of the sun that was going down behind the old church. The dogs raced off, of course, to chase the sheep, and I had to run to put them on the leash again. The shepherd's dog, surprised at such foolish commotion, looked up, and the shepherd, without moving, spoke, so softly, so calmly, one word—"*Ici!*" And the dog went straight to him and sat down by his side. There was something very significant in it all; the quiet confidence of the shepherd, wrapped in his cloak, leaning on his crook, his slow, gentle movements, the almost imperceptible advance he made across the field, the flock scattering out behind him, feeding; then, at a single soft word, gathering about him again. Christmas Eve, and shepherds watched their flocks by night, as of old! We stopped and listened; even the dogs were silent in that holy peace.

Peace! . . . But there was the dull, distant throb of the guns. And poor humanity, as sheep scattered abroad, having no shepherd!

XXXVII. HERMAN BULLE

My wife had invited the men of the C.R.B. to the Orangerie for Christmas afternoon, at tea-time, and she asked Hermancito, whose kindness was so constantly at the disposal of every one, to let her know for how many she would have to prepare. She had had a note from him on Christmas Eve telling her of the approximative number, though he could not be quite sure, for they had not all as yet come in from the provinces. "I can be certain of but one thing," he had written, "and that is that I shall be there, the first to arrive."

They came, a host of them, and by some tacit recognition of the season they would not speak of all the heart-rending scenes they had been witnessing, but talked of other things, of America principally, and of Christmas at home. There were laughing groups in the *salon* and in the dining-room, and after a while some one said:

"Where is Bulle?"

No one had seen him that day. . . . The talk and the laughter went on.

"Where is Hermancito?" I asked each new-comer—but no one knew. Then some one came, late; there was a whisper, then a hush, and silence. Bulle was very ill, taken suddenly on Christmas Eve. . . .

My wife and I went to see him the next morning at his home in the Rue Joseph II. The Mexican flag which he had kept bravely flying was on the staff. It was still within. The concierge whispered with me in the hall; he must be kept very quiet. Christmas Eve he had dined at Baron Lambert's; he had walked homeward along the Boulevard with Count van der Straaten Ponthos, of the Belgian Foreign Office, and at the corner of the Rue Joseph II the Count had suddenly noticed an incoherence in his speech. He got him home; they put him to bed, and now his life was hanging by a slender thread. . . . Two days later he was dead.

"*La belle humeur*," says an old French proverb, "*est une des plus jolies formes du courage.*" Hermancito had good humour, and he had courage, too, such Spartan courage as it is the fortune of few to possess. He had seen his career broken just when it was coming to fruition, and at first, without resources, with his country in agony, its Government in collapse, he was starting off to America to become an American citizen and to begin life anew, when I thought of him for the *ravitaillement*. He filled a delicate position in that important work with such entire acceptability that every one was delighted, and he was a favourite with all the men. He was the sort of favourite with whom every one takes affectionate liberties. When the American expedition was sent to Mexico he was as delighted as anybody; he had always said that he looked to America to restore order there, and when, in the etiquette of belligerency, which the young men of the C.R.B. had so many opportunities of studying, they pretended for a day that they must not recognize him or take his hand, he told me of it with that infectious laughter he had for every amusing circumstance in a life that latterly had not been amusing for him. He had served at Madrid, at Vienna, at London, at Washington, and he was full of good reminiscence. Nothing amused him more, however, than the office-boy at the C.R.B. He was the son of an American woman who had married a German

baron, long since dead; but the boy was Baron, too, and the young Americans of the C.R.B. had a constant and inexhaustible delight in saying:

"Baron, get me a match;" or

"Baron, my hat."

But we, all of us, called on Bulle oftener than on any baron for many services, and there seemed to be nothing he could not do. Many a delicate mission he accomplished for me, many a little tangle he unravelled, many a little miracle he wrought for which I guiltily accepted the gratitude of some one in trouble.

And all that time he had been mortally ill. He referred to it in talking with me just once, and then almost casually, and never mentioned it again. There are not many men with that indomitable courage, and I should like to pay my tribute to it, and to him, who was a true and loyal and unselfish friend in a world where, as one learns more and more as one lives on in it, friends are rare, and hard to get, and harder still to keep.

We buried him on a cold, dark, winter morning, the last but one in the old year. In his little house in the Rue Joseph II he lay under flowers and the Mexican flag, in a room all black, amid the bewildering crackling of candles, with the concierge's two little children behind a curtain in the hall, broken-heartedly sobbing over the friend they had lost. Bulle's father and mother were in London, but a sister had come, and Señor Bestegue, who had been Mexican Minister at Berlin, was there to represent his prostrate nation. But in the streets outside there was, I thought, every one I knew in Brussels; members of the Belgian Government who were left in the town, the remnants of the diplomatic corps, representatives of the C.N. and the C.R.B., and a half-dozen German officers. For one morning the war and its divisions were laid aside; for one morning even Belgians and Germans could meet in the community of affection and respect that one simple, modest, obscure life could inspire, and in the commonalty of sorrow that that kindly nature had left this earth. We followed the hearse on foot, a great crowd in black, to the church of St.-Josse at the bottom of the Rue des Deux-Églises. There, amid the tolling bells, with the chant of a single voice in the choir, while an old priest was celebrating the Mass—strange expression of this strange life of ours!—a wedding was going on

at the same moment before another altar in the vast and gloomy pile.

Every one that knew him loved Herman Bulle, though not every one knew how brave and strong a man he was. For not every one knows—very few indeed, in this torn and distracted world, know—that gentleness is the one great force.

XXXVIII. THE COMING CHANGE

THERE is an amiable custom in Belgium of observing two holidays where one is noted on the calendar; a frank recognition, I suppose, prompted by universal experience, of the fact that one good holiday deserves another in order that one may recover from its effects. The day after Christmas, when all the town was closed and wore the air, if not of a holiday, at least of a *dimanche*, as the Belgians call all their holidays, an event happened that created something like a panic in our midst. We had word from Liége to the effect that the Germans had posted an *affiche* announcing that because of the evil deeds of England the *ravitaillement* was discontinued, the Comité National dissolved, the functions of the Commission for Relief suspended, and that the feeding of the population would thenceforward be carried on under German authority. The *affiche*, with German thoroughness, contained a long series of paragraphs directing in the minutest detail just how the work should be done. I made inquiry at once, and after they had telephoned from the Politische Abteilung to Liége, where the Geheimrath Kauffmann was then Civil Governor, the authorities reported to me that it was all a mistake, that the orders had been prepared to be used only in a certain eventuality, and that by a blunder they had been published, and then only in one commune, that of St.-Nicolas. The incident's only importance, then, after we had recovered from the shock it caused us and were breathing freely again, lay in the testimony it gave to German foresight; there was no exigency which the German mind could imagine for which it was not prepared.

The old year died to the infernal chorus of the cannon, and the new was introduced by the Allies' response to the peace proposals, which gave little hope of peace, and we turned again

to the endless round of our familiar difficulties. There was a phenomenon noted throughout the war; with the coming on of winter, what, in those scientific terms which the least scientific of us like to employ, was called the "curve of peace" was rising; it went steadily up, and then in January it dropped to zero once more, ready to begin its slow and painful gradation upward with the hopes of a weary and disheartened world.

In a long conversation with Baron von der Lancken on New Year's Day I told him again of the universal reprobation excited by the deportation of the working men, and he said that the policy was to be abandoned, though gradually, so that the adversaries of Germany could not say that it had been given up under pressure. I had had a dispatch from Washington saying that the interest in the revolting procedure was "inconceivable" in America, as well it might be, and I was glad to be able to say in the report I was then preparing that there were indications that it was to be discontinued. It was not discontinued just then, however, and it has not been wholly discontinued since, despite announcements by the German Government giving an official tenor to what Lancken had told me as gossip behind the scenes. The Germans were just then preparing the levy that was to be made at Malines on January 4, and Lancken told me that if I desired I might send a representative of the Legation to witness the scene. I told him that I should not officially send a representative or be in any way identified with the proceeding, but that if he could go as a mere spectator I should permit Christian Herter, an attaché, detailed for a while from the Embassy at Berlin to assist us in the Legation, to look on. Lancken agreed, and going himself to witness the seizures took Herter as his guest. Herter was a young man just out of Harvard and animated with all the enthusiasm of an intelligent liberalism, and he returned from Malines, after a day spent in the cold, full of the horror of the scenes he had witnessed. They were no different from the scenes that were being enacted in that sombre tragedy all over Belgium, and I have already described them to such an extent that it would be merely piling horror on horror to repeat them, but they were made all the more odious in Herter's eyes by the fact that the officers in charge, evidently because a neutral representative was present, tried to invest their cruelties with a solicitude that only deepened the young man's disgust. They

asked him to taste the soup provided for the poor fellows they were enslaving, and as he was in the act, his tall, slender form bent over the steaming kettle, they snapped cameras at him, until he had disturbing visions of himself appearing in illustrated weeklies as an approving witness of the gentleness and propriety of German methods.

The Germans complained to me afterwards that he had not been "correct"—because he had protested against this photographing, and because he had asked some embarrassing questions during the arbitrary division of the men into *Links* and *Rechts*; but then the Germans were always protesting, as though on principle, against the action of some one connected with the American Legation, and two years and a half of this mild form of frightfulness had hardened me and left me indifferent.

I had my usual daily stream of callers, each with his individual trouble, or danger, or despair. I had not been out of the city for a year any farther than Malines or Mariemont, and the want of change of air and of scene had had the worst effect on my health. But a change was coming; we had many premonitions of it, though we did not know just how soon it would be upon us. . . .

In the meantime, however, those days had to be lived, and they brought in a kind of monotony the same troubles with each morning. I remember an Englishman, a resident of Brussels, sixty-eight years of age, who forty-two years before had resigned a commission in the English Territorial forces. Hearing of this the Germans classified him as an officer in the English army and ordered him deported to Germany. He came to ask my aid, concerned for the wife he would have to leave.

"If I go," he said pathetically, "I shall never see her again."

He did not say it with any sense of pathos, or to be pathetic; he was very calm, very British. I put in a plea for him, and two days later he was there again; he had been ordered to report that night at ten o'clock. It meant, he thought—and rightly—Germany and Ruhleben the next morning.

"Is there any hope for me?" he asked.

There was something touching to me in this elderly Englishman standing there, with such a cruel fate hanging over him, sixty-eight, and ill, long a resident of Brussels in that exile which so many Englishmen had known in the old city. I got up at

once and went to Lancken, and after I had talked for a while he promised me, as a personal favour, he said, that the man would not be deported.

The next morning the Englishman came to the Legation again; he did not look sixty-eight that morning; he was much younger in the joy he tried to hide, as he had tried to hide his pain. He had gone, as ordered, to the Kommandantur the night before at ten o'clock, trembling, fearing, and a German in broken French had said:

"*Pas aller en Allemagne! Vous avez des amis! Vous êtes libre! A la maison!*"

There was another caller on those days, a funny little Frenchman with a wizened, dwarfish face, who said that he was a pastor of a mission in Brussels; he belonged to some evangelical sect that had its headquarters in Cincinnati, which was so near my home that I took an unusual interest in him, though he had never been to Cincinnati and accepted it all on faith. He had been hailed before the German tribunals on a charge of having read to his congregation anti-German literature, as all propagandists call their printed matter. He was fifty years old, but, as though the fact might testify to the wider experience of a still more advanced age, he explained that he had a wife who was seventy-one. I told him that as he was French he should go to Villalobar, who had charge of French interests; but no, he said, he was pastor of an American church and would place himself under the American ægis. I told him that, as was the case with Paul and the Germans of his day, the Germans had power only over his physical and not his spiritual body, and that therefore he must go to the Spanish Legation. He laughed and did so, but I did what I could to aid him, and he did not suffer.

There were not many of my visitors who could laugh at any phase of their predicaments. There was an old man who had read that morning in the Dutch newspapers that his son had fallen on the Belgian front; those outside sometimes communicated with those inside by inserting advertisements in the Rotterdam dailies, and there was nothing that I or anybody could do to aid this man in his trouble.

Then one evening just at tea-time who should appear, to our joy, but Vernon Kellogg, back in Belgium on a mission for the north of France. He had got as far as London on his homeward

way, and there Mr. Hoover had prevailed on him to remain and to undertake another of those errands with which he was always so successful. He had been to Paris and to Havre, and reported that M. Francqui and Mr. Hoover had solved their problems, and that Mr. Hoover had gone to America to arrange a loan to carry on the *ravitaillement*, which had long since outgrown the charity on which it had once lived. Then M. Francqui returned, and the next day Villalobar, with the news of the world outside, and the Grand Cordon de St.-Grégoire le Grand, which the Pope had given him. Baron von der Lancken returned, too, from Berlin, and when I saw him at luncheon at the Marquis's house he said in the course of our gossip, first, that he had been unable to arrange for the train for the English women because of the hatred of everything English at Berlin, and then that the effect of the response of the Allied Governments to the President's Note on peace had been to strengthen the military party, who were just then *pour la guerre à outrance*. He hoped, he said, that the submarine warfare would not be renewed, but that Berlin thought America would not go to war if it was. I changed the subject, but from that moment whatever doubts I may have had were dispelled and I knew what was before us.

The German Chancellor might cynically refer to Belgium as a "pawn" in the "Imperial" hands, but to us, who saw it all and lived it, she was a suffering, sentient being, quivering and bleeding under hoof and pistol-butt. Von Bissing, sick at Wiesbaden, was practically eliminated, and the military were having their own way unmolested. They had ordered all the copper seized, and Belgian housewives, proud of their shining *batteries de cuisine*, were in tears at the thought of losing their precious heirlooms; all walnut- and poplar-trees were ordered cut down—the lovely tall poplars that are, or were, so characteristic a mark of the landscape of Brabant. We ourselves had the visit at the Orangerie of a bandy-legged German, long a resident of Brussels, and then serving his country as a member of the Secret Police; he came stalking into the house and began shouting uncouth orders to me to fell the two poplar-trees that formed so charming a part of the sky-line at the bottom of our lawn, and when, as who should say "Woodman, spare that tree," I began to protest, he interrupted me and said in his miserable guttural French that I had nothing to do but to obey. I could have brained him where

he stood—so promptly do evil communications corrupt good manners—and when I mentioned the Politische Abteilung and the exemptions it had ordered, he said that he cared nothing for the Politische Abteilung. I got him out of the house at last, and was angry for an hour afterward. I saved the trees, or Von Moltke kindly saved them for me, but I had a slight, a very slight experience of what every household in Belgium endured during those evil times.

XXXIX. THE SEIZURES AT BRUSSELS

THE slave-drive at Brussels began on January 20. For several days the *Polizei* had been distributing the yellow cards ordering the recipients to appear on the morning of that day at the Gare du Midi, with boots, blankets, and extra heavy clothing. The cards bore an offer of employment and threatened a fine for disobedience of its command. The men thus summoned were in nearly every case *chômeurs*; the Germans had made up the lists from the files at the Meldeamt. No public order had been proclaimed; notice was served on each individual. The effect was not that instantaneous sensation which the posting of an *affiche* produced in a village, but the news percolated gradually and created its horror. On January 18 an *affiche* was posted seeking to justify the policy as benevolent in its intentions and of benefit to the Belgian nation.*

LE TRANSFERT DES CHÔMEURS

Avis du GOUVERNEUR, LIEUTENANT GÉNÉRAL HURT, en date du 12 janvier 1917

La campagne de calomnies et de mensonges menée par nos ennemis s'est nourrie, ces derniers temps, de l'expédition des sans-travail se trouvant en Belgique. Des protestations pleines de phraséologie se sont élevées contre cette mesure, tant dans le territoire occupé de la Belgique que dans les pays neutres ou ennemis. Les grands mots servant de fond à ces protestations sont principalement: "Atteinte au droit des gens," "Attentat à la dignité et à la liberté des ouvriers belges," "Crime contre l'humanité et les droits de la famille," "Esclavage et travail forcé comme pour les criminels." La plupart des protestations livrées à la publicité comptent sur l'ignorance et la crédulité des masses pour semer en Belgique l'inquiétude et plonger ainsi le pays dans de nouveaux malheurs. Jusqu'à présent, ces desseins ont échoué devant le bon sens de la population. Toutefois, sous l'effet des excitations sans mesure, un certain nombre d'ouvriers expédiés continuent à estimer que l'"honneur" et le "patriotisme" exigent qu'ils refusent de se mettre au travail.

Tous ceux qui vivent en Belgique savent qu'il y a ici, depuis des années plusieurs centaines de mille sans-travail sollicitant en vain une occupation que beaucoup de sans-travail, du fait que les secours publics ne suffisent pas dans bien des cas à l'entretien de leurs familles, se sont égarés du droit chemin

. The eve of the deportations the fear that brooded over the city was almost palpable to the senses. Even women had received the fatal yellow cards. The 20th came, and almost before daylight, early in that cold, glacial dawn—there had been what we in America call a blizzard—the men began to appear

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que, dans ces conditions, l'insécurité des biens, l'amour du jeu et la paresse se sont accrus sans cesse. En bon nombre d'endroits, des bandes armées comptant jusque quarante hommes, ont ravagé les champs et les jardins. Aux environs des Trois-Fontaines et ailleurs encore, de véritables combats se sont livrés entre les patrouilles allemandes du service forestier et des voleurs de bois et des braconniers. Le commerce clandestin des produits alimentaires a pris des proportions telles, que la distribution équitable de ces produits et l'approvisionnement uniforme de toutes les classes de la population sont devenus quasi impossibles.

En présence de cette situation et en vue d'éclairer les esprits, je porte ce qui suit à la connaissance de la population :

" Atteinte au droit des gens." Suivant l'article 52 de l'Annexe à la Convention de La Haye du 18 octobre 1907, les services exigés des habitants doivent être " de telle nature qu'ils n'impliquent pas pour les populations l'obligation de prendre part à des opérations de la guerre contre leur patrie." L'article 43 oblige le pouvoir occupant " de rétablir et d'assurer l'ordre et la vie publics."

Les autorités allemandes ont déclaré à plusieurs reprises qu'aucun Belge ne serait astreint à des travaux en opposition avec l'article 52. Conformément à l'article 43, Son Excellence le Gouverneur général s'est vu en droit et obligé de publier ses arrêtés des 14 et 15 août 1915, édictant des mesures contre ceux qui refusent de faire un travail d'intérêt public ou qui, par paresse, se soustraient au travail. De même l'expédition des sans-travail à d'autres lieux de travail n'est interdite par aucune disposition du droit des gens. L'Angleterre, la France et la Russie n'ont jamais hésité, tant qu'ils en ont eu l'occasion, d'éloigner des milliers d'habitants des territoires occupés par ces puissances et de contraindre ces gens au travail, bien souvent en les maltraitant indignement.

Je le demande : Pourquoi les protestataires, avant d'élever la voix, n'ont-i s pas consulté les dispositions du droit des gens applicables en la matière ?

" Attentat à la dignité et à la liberté des ouvriers." L'honneur et la dignité des ouvriers belges leur commandent-ils de se laisser nourrir eux et leurs familles, par l'assistance publique, alors qu'en d'autres localités ils peuvent se procurer un travail rémunérateur ? La " liberté " exige-t-elle que des centaines et des centaines de mille ouvriers sains et robustes, poussés par un faux patriotisme ou par paresse, se croisent les bras, alors que l'existence de nombreux millions d'êtres réclame impérieusement la production des denrées alimentaires et le maintien du trafic ?

" Crime contre l'humanité et les droits de la famille." La voix de l'humanité et le bien des familles commandent-ils que des hommes aptes au travail se traînent dans les cabarets, sur les places de jeux et aux coins des rues, pendant que les femmes et les enfants endurent au foyer les affres de la misère et de la faim ? Est-ce à l'avantage des familles ouvrières que beaucoup de pères, de fils et de frères s'habituent à l'oisiveté, ou bien deviennent des voleurs et des criminels et finissent par échouer dans les prisons ? N'est-il pas plus humain de contraindre les sans-travail à gagner pour leur famille le pain nécessaire ?

" Esclavage et travail forcé comme pour les criminels." Est-ce l'esclavage, est-ce le travail forcé lorsque les ouvriers belges qui, déjà pendant la paix, cherchaient souvent du travail à l'étranger, se voient offrir à présent une occupation moyennant un salaire très élevé, sous les mêmes conditions et dans les mêmes circonstances qu'aux ouvriers allemands ?

Pour terminer, je ferai remarquer qu'à l'occasion des premiers envois de sans-travail, quelques erreurs et méprises se sont commises par le fait que les administrations communales belges avaient refusé d'aider à la désignation des

at the Gare du Midi. They came in groups of ten, of twenty, of fifty, some in warm clothes, with their bundles pathetically ready, others without even overcoats, shivering in the searching wind. With them were their women and children, come for the last good-bye. The arrangements were diabolically perfect; all

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intéressés. Son Excellence le Gouverneur général a immédiatement ordonné d'examiner les divers cas et de provoquer la rentrée des personnes expédiées abusivement. Plus les autorités belges faciliteront la tâche, plus les rigueurs et les erreurs seront évitées à l'avenir.

Translation

THE TRANSFER OF THE "CHÔMEURS"

Notice of the GOVERNOR, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HURT, dated January 12, 1917

The campaign of calumny and of lies carried out by enemies has been nourished lately by the sending away of the unemployed in Belgium. Protestations full of phraseology are raised against this measure, as much in the occupied territory of Belgium as in the countries of neutrals or enemies. Big words serving as a ground for these protestations are principally: "Violation of international law," "Assault against the dignity and the liberty of Belgian working men," "Crime against humanity and family life," "Slavery and forced labour as for criminals." The greater part of the protestations made public count on the ignorance and credulity of the masses in order to spread dissatisfaction in Belgium, and hence to plunge the country in new woe. Up to the present time this design has failed because of the good sense of the population. However, under the effect of excitations without measure a certain number of working men sent away continue to esteem that "honour" and "patriotism" demand that they refuse to go to work.

All those who live in Belgium know that there have been here for several years several hundreds of thousands of unemployed seeking occupation in vain; that many of the unemployed, from the fact that public charity is not sufficient, in many cases, to care for their families, have left the straight path; that under these conditions the insecurity of property, the love of gambling and of idleness, have increased in large measures. In many places armed bands of as many as forty have ravaged fields and gardens. In the neighbourhood of Trois-Fontaines and other places veritable combats have taken place between German patrols of the forest service and those stealing wood and poachers. Clandestine commerce in alimentary products has taken on such proportions that an equitable distribution of these products and an equal provisioning of all classes of the population has become almost impossible.

In the presence of this situation, and in order to enlighten the mind, I bring the following to the knowledge of the population:

"Violation of international law." Following art. 52 of the Annex to The Hague Convention of October 18, 1907, the work demanded of inhabitants shall be of such a nature that it will not imply for the population the obligation to take part in operations of war against their country. Article 43 obliges the occupying Power to re-establish and to protect life and maintain public order.

The German authorities have declared several times that no Belgian will be compelled to work contrarily to art. 52. In conformity with art. 53, His Excellency the Governor-General has felt himself to have the right, and was obliged to publish his decrees of August 14 and 15, 1915, edicting measures against those who refuse to work in the public interest, or who, by laziness, avoid work. Besides, the sending of unemployed to other places of labour is not prohibited by any provision of international law. England, France, and Russia have never hesitated, whenever they had occasion, to remove thousands of inhabitants from

the streets were barred, and there was a squadron of Uhlans, grim and brutal as only Uhlans know how to be, to keep the people back, so that only those provided with the yellow cards had the sinister distinction of admission to the lines. The men were taken inside the station, while those who had already bidden them precautionary and grievous farewells lingered in the anguish of a persistent hope behind those ropes, beyond the lances of the Uhlans. The hours passed; the selection went on within the walls of the station.

Now and then a man would bolt from the gaunt structure, dancing for very joy, some physical defect, some latent disease, long perhaps the subject of sad and morbid preoccupation, dreaded in itself as a portent of doom, a sentence of death, now proved to be a reprieve instead, a means of liberation, so that its victim could fling himself into the arms of some waiting woman and mingle his tears of joy with hers, and so away, as though treading on air, some miracle having restored life and hope. . . . But there were other women who waited all that day, until their

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territories occupied by these Powers, and they compelled these inhabitants to work, very often treating them with indignity.

I ask: "Why have not protesters, before raising their voice, consulted the provisions of international law applicable to this subject?"

"Assault on the dignity and on the liberty of working men." Does the honour and the dignity of Belgian working men command them to permit themselves and their families to be fed by public assistance when in other localities they can find remunerative labour? Does liberty demand that hundreds and hundreds of thousands of working men, wealthy and robust, impelled by a false patriotism or by laziness, fold their arms when the existence of millions of beings imperiously demands the production of food-stuffs and the maintenance of traffic?

"Crime against humanity and the rights of families." Does the voice of humanity and the well-being of families demand that men fit for labour should loaf in public-houses, on playing-fields, and on street corners, while their wives and children at home endure the pangs of poverty and of hunger? Is it to the advantage of working men's families that many fathers, sons, and brothers acquire the habit of laziness or become thieves and criminals and finish as wrecks in prisons? Is it not more humane to compel the unemployed to work to gain the necessary bread for their families?

"Slavery and forced labour as for criminals." Is it slavery, is it forced labour, when Belgian workmen, who already in time of peace sought work in other countries, are now offered an occupation that will pay them large wages under the same conditions and in the same circumstances as German working men?

'Finally, I shall point out that at the time when the first unemployed were sent away some errors and mistakes were committed because the Belgian communal administrations had refused to aid in designating the persons concerned. His Excellency the Governor-General immediately ordered an examination of divers cases and brought about the return of those persons who were wrongly sent away. The greater the facilities given by the Belgian authorities to this task, the more will rigorous measures and mistakes be avoided in the future.

tears dried in the dumb anguish of that cruel and monstrous separation.

Mr. Gregory had secured permission for the delegates of the C.R.B. to be present, and they distributed food and clothing to the men, who were herded into the waiting cattle-cars and hurried away into that awful and, as it proved for so many of them, that hopeless exile.

That same evening I received a delegation from the burgomasters of ten communes in La Louvière, near Charleroi, asking that permission be obtained to send to the deported men in Germany *caissettes*, boxes of food such as were sent to the prisoners of war. The German authorities had refused to permit this save in certain isolated instances, and some Belgians, returning from their captivity, reported that even when such packages were received they only gave the authorities of the slave-compounds an additional and effective means of coercing the deported Belgians to sign the labour contracts.

The seizures continued for days; the arctic weather grew more and more severe, and at last even the Germans were moved; they announced on Thursday that the deportations would be suspended. It was said, though I never had any means of verifying the figures, that at Brussels only about fifteen hundred were summoned, that of these seven hundred and fifty appeared, and that three hundred were deported, so that the capital did not suffer in comparison with other places.

Dr. Kellogg, back from the north of France, reported that the generals down there were in a blind rage over the failure of the peace plans, and were furiously determined to pull down the pillars of the world, that the unlimited submarine warfare was inevitable, and Baron von der Lancken, just then returning from Berlin, told a diplomat that the military party was in the saddle, and that the *militaires* had decided on the expulsion of the neutral diplomats from Bukarest, saying, "We don't wish another such state of affairs as we've had in Belgium." It was said, too, that the Germans felt that the war was nearing its end, and that they could not win, and that, maddened by the response the Allies had made to the peace overtures, they would make war more frightful than ever.

The newspapers at Brussels had published mutilated transcripts from the President's Message of January 22, but they

published enough to make one realize it as a great and historic document, one of those charters of human liberty that speak for voiceless peoples everywhere, and it was the only light in the darkness of the times. It produced its instant effect in Belgium, where the people, who had come to national consciousness through suffering, seemed somehow instinctively to understand and to appreciate the President long before others had recognized in him the leader of liberalism in a world where the forces of reaction were everywhere so strong. I had numerous instances of this understanding. "*Magnifique! mais magnifique!*" many a man exclaimed to me, and even a little girl, whose mother was in a German prison, wrote me a letter to express her joy, saying that it was a "hope for the people."

The German Kaiser's birthday, fell on the 27th, and the Germans were celebrating an event that really seems to have been fraught with considerable interest for mankind. They fired salutes from cannon in the broad space of the Place Polaert, before the Palais de Justice—and to the delight of the Belgians the horses reared and injured eight soldiers. And in the Grand' Place they acted a comedy: German officers mounted to the portico of the Hôtel de Ville and the Maison du Roi, waving handkerchiefs to the crowds below—crowds composed of the horde of German civilians at Brussels summoned to impersonate the Brussels populace before the cinematographic machines that were industriously grinding in the corners of the beautiful square, taking pictures to be reproduced later as proof of the love the Belgians bore the invaders of their land and their homes, their liberties and their honour.

The sentiments in the hearts of those sad people dragging through those bleak streets on that Imperial birthday were far other than those expressed by those waving handkerchiefs, and the servile "*Hoch! Hoch!*" of those docile folk in the Grand' Place, doing always as they were told.

These days, the last in that dark month of January, remain in my memory with the distinctness of etchings. They were so cold, so still, and so highly charged with foreboding. Their incidents seemed invariably saddening; Van Holder, for instance, taken suddenly ill just as his art was touched with some new, profounder quality by the sorrows of the war, must go at once to Switzerland, and I begged a *Passierschein* for him. He went,

and while it is of no relevance, I can recall each detail of the walk I took late one afternoon to tell his family that I had heard of his safe arrival at Davos-Platz. It had been snowing hard all day, and toward evening I went over to his house, past the old *estaminet*, Le Vieux Cornet, in the garden of which on pleasant Sunday afternoons in summer I used to see the members of the archery clubs, in shirt-sleeves, at their ancient, graceful sport, letting fly their arrows at the tufted tops of the tall poles; I trudged over to his house through the deep snow across the fields there behind La Ferme Rose, which all the artists of Brussels during so many years have loved to paint. The snow was piled high all around the garden that had been so laughing, so gay, all summer long. I rang at the high gate, and the bell clanged dismally against the ivy that mantled the façade of the house. There was no response any more; the family had gone to the home of relatives.

And I recall that other walk I took with Josse Allard in the twilight over the snow in the Park, its shining surface glowing pink in the sun that had gone down in flame behind the dark trees to the west; we talked of intimate things, vague hopes and dreams, and of *après la guerre*. The dogs tumbled and gambolled in the snow, and the old Groenendael at the closed château began to bay. . . .

Why do such immaterial scenes live vivid in the memory? Is it because they are already invested with that saddest of all sentiments—the feeling of *jamais plus*? The sense of it haunted me persistently, paralysing all initiative, all energy. . . .

XL. "LA GUERRE A OUTRANCE"

THEN late one evening Ruddock sent me word that Von der Lancken wished to see me at ten o'clock on the morrow; it was very urgent, though he had not said what it was about. There was no need to say; I knew that at last the end had come.

I drove to the Politische Abteilung the next morning before ten o'clock, and when I went into the little room where Conrad sat I read in his grave face the reflected seriousness of the situation. I asked him what was up, but he, dutifully keeping his secret, pretended not to know. I was shown into that yellow

salon, the scene of so many anxious, so many difficult, so many painful hours during those years. I stood in the embrasure of the window looking out across the Rue Ducale into the Park, watching the white sea-gulls that were there all that winter, as they were before the Palace of the King. They had been driven in from the North Sea by the rigours of the terrible winter to seek their food, and the people used to feed them, standing in the cold and flinging them the crumbs they could hardly spare. The gulls, wheeling with consummate skill on wings of silver and of pearl, there over the snow in the cold winter's sunlight, were concerned about their *ravitaillement* too, poor lovely things!

And then there was Villalobar, just come, standing beside me.

"*C'est la guerre sous-marine—à outrance*," he said in a low, serious tone.

Von Moltke had told him. And somehow for a second I was glad that the moment at last had come, glad that a situation so long impossible was at last made clear, glad above all that neutrality was at an end. Van Vollenhoven arrived; he, too, had been summoned to hear the announcement. We waited. . . .

After a while Von der Lancken entered in his grey uniform and the well-worn puttees, evidently from a morning canter in the Bois. He was pale, with those black circles under his eyes that always showed there when he was troubled or concerned. He made a little apology for having kept us waiting, and then waved us to our familiar seats at that marble-topped centre table. Dr. Brohn appeared in a great double-breasted blue coat with silver buttons, and enormous boots, as big as Bismarck's; and then Dr. Reith in a long morning coat, extremely high collar, and brilliant cravat. They were seated, and then Lancken began formally:

"*Messieurs, j'ai une communication importante à vous faire en ce qui concerne la guerre sous-marine. Je m'adresse à vous en votre qualité de protecteurs de l'œuvre de ravitaillement.*"

And then he asked Dr. Reith to read, and opening a great dossier Reith read to us the Note addressed by Herr Zimmerman to Mr. Gerard, declaring Germany's intention to blockade the coasts of Great Britain, France, and Italy, and after he had read this he read a statement to the effect that the German Government did not wish the C.R.B. to cease functioning, and

desired us to consider what could be done to ensure the continuance of the *ravitaillement.** Then for three-quarters of an hour we discussed the new situation, which was so far beyond any decision of ours, or any hope of change, since it represented the will of the military party, whose steady rise to autocratic power in Germany had been revealed by the successive measures of the deportations, the military power that must be consulted even before the decision in so small a matter as the granting of permission to a few English nurses and governesses to leave Belgium could be reached. Bissing, dying at Wiesbaden, was no longer the depository of sovereign power in Belgium, but a mere figurehead in whose name the General Staff governed Belgium, as it governed the Étape and the north of France. It was the moment that decided the fall of Von Bethmann, approved every extravagance of Von Tirpitz, and witnessed the apotheosis of Von Hindenburg, though men there in Belgium, the inevitable sceptical, always seeking the power behind the throne, were contending that Hindenburg owed his laurels to the genius of Ludendorff, the real intelligence in the General Staff.

Lancken in giving us copies of the documents gave as also little maps showing the lines drawn around Great Britain, Spain,

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* The statement is as follows :

Il va sans dire que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a aucunement l'intention d'empêcher l'œuvre humanitaire du ravitaillement de la Belgique. Mais le Gouvernement Impérial doit exiger que la Commission for Relief fera voyager ses navires en dehors de la zone interdite. Il a été prévu que les navires qui se trouvent le 1er février dans la zone interdite peuvent quitter, en prenant le chemin le plus direct, la dite zone sans craindre d'attaques imprévues, et que les navires se trouvant dans les ports anglais peuvent les quitter jusqu'au 4 février au soir, et peuvent traverser la zone interdite par la voie la plus directe. Toutefois la Commission for Relief est engagée de la manière la plus pressante à détourner par un avertissement immédiat tous les navires en cours de route vers les parages situés en dehors de la zone interdite. Les navires qui ne donneraient pas suite à un tel avertissement le feront à leurs propres risques et perils.

Translation

It goes without saying that the Imperial Government has not the slightest intention of hindering the work of the *ravitaillement* of Belgium. But the Imperial Government must demand that the Commission for Relief cause its ships to travel outside the forbidden zone. It has been provided that the ships in the forbidden zone on February 1 can leave the said zone, by the most direct route, without fear of unexpected attacks, and that the ships finding themselves in English ports can, up to the evening of February 4, leave them and can cross the forbidden zone by the most direct route. Nevertheless the Commission for Relief is urged in the most earnest manner to divert by an immediate notice all ships *en route* toward those waters situated outside the forbidden zone. The ships that do not give heed to such a notice will do so at their own risk and peril.

and Italy, those dead lines across which—incredible insolence!—American ships were not to pass. Looking at them I knew what America would say, and yet just then, studying for the moment those charts, we did not discuss that question. We followed the narrow and tortuous lane that had been traced for the C.R.B. ships around the Orkneys and John o' Groat's, and around Italy and Spain, and then Villalobar, with his finger on the map of his own country, said:

"You haven't left us room enough even to go in bathing!"

We sent for M. Francqui and Mr. Gregory. What was to be done? Could the *ravitaillement* be preserved? I was glad of Gregory's presence, for his legal mind, his clear conceptions, his logical thought, always pertinent and to the point, helped us to a decision that meant much for Belgium. He had intended to go to Rotterdam on the next day; he determined instead to go at once, and it was decided that M. Francqui should go with him, to communicate with the Belgian Government in an effort to induce Great Britain to permit the work of the C.R.B. to continue. I suggested that we telegraph to the heads of our respective States to ask them to arrange with the British Government a means whereby the C.R.B. ships could land at Rotterdam without having to stop at English ports to be searched for contraband, the control to be exercised at Rotterdam or at New York. While we were discussing this and agreeing to it, Brohn whispered to me:

"What will the President say? That is the important thing."

It was not for me to answer that question, though I thought that I might answer it, and answer it correctly, but I had the impression that the Germans, with their persistent misunderstanding of American psychology and character, were convinced even then that they could tack around this point by trimming the sails of long and tortuous diplomatic discussion. I had another impression, and that was that the Germans were certain that the submarines thus unleashed and set free to work their cruel and reckless will would win the war and win it quickly for Germany.

"It is hard," said Brohn, "but in the end it is kind, for we must end it. It is like a surgical operation." Brohn spoke generally in English; he had been much in America. And Lancken added:

"*Oui, il faut que ça finisse.*"

And so we separated to send off our telegrams to Washington and Madrid. Van Vollenhoven was going to The Hague for the week-end—it was on a Thursday. Lancken promised passports for Gregory and Francqui; they would go to Holland that afternoon.

It was very cold and clear the next day, what enthusiasts call fine winter weather. We waited and watched. And yet I was perfectly certain of the answer; it would be war, inevitable from that moment in August 1914, when the two old systems clashed once more in a world that, by the many inventions which man, originally made upright, had wickedly sought out, had grown too small for both to live in it any longer together. It had been inevitable from the moment when the war brought face to face at last two civilizations, two ideals, two faiths—on the one hand the ideal of liberty and human justice, on the other that of brute force and material success. It was the logical conclusion of the whole question raised by the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and nobody who was not the dupe of the stupendous illusions of that other world in which we used to live ever would have supposed that Germans could restrain themselves from using, once they had it, such a weapon as the submarine, which, combining ruthlessness and stealth, exercised on their maniacal minds a fatal fascination, and, by one of those ironies with which history is replete, was destined to lure them ultimately to their own defeat.

War! The word assumed a new meaning as I thought of my own country involved in it. For as the Germans had conceived it and forced it on the world, war was more hideous than ever.

"*Der Krieg hat gar nichts elegantes mehr*," as the old Emperor Franz-Josef said.

And yet, strangely, I felt no regret in it. I was suddenly, not exultant, but proud and glad that my country had arisen in the fierceness and pride of its athletic democracy and taken up the insolent defiance of the power that I had come to know too well; and then suddenly I realized that I had another cause for resentment against the Germans—they had made me insensible to the feeling that once, long since, I should have expected to find, in such a moment, in my breast.

I was almost sorry that I had not sent that presumptuous telegram to Washington in those first nights of the war—how

long ago it seemed! I might have had the petty human satisfaction of being on record, of posing as a vindicated prophet, of saying, "I told you so." Strange that so many in my own country had not seen it! But then they had not seen Germans, modern, imperialistic super-Germans. They knew only the old kind of the Sunday afternoon beer-garden and the meerschaum pipe, listening to the band playing sentimental waltzes. No sentimental waltz now, but another tune to dance to!

XLI. WAITING

I SPENT the whole of the following day, Saturday, at the Legation, waiting for word from Washington. Sunday came, and we waited all day at the Orangerie, where it was still so peaceful, the great Park steeped in the white solitude of the crisp snow. At tea-time Villalobar arrived, and even before he had spoken a word I could read in his face the news he brought. The President had broken off diplomatic relations; he had it from Lancken, who had shown him the Reuter and Wolff dispatches. The Marquis had hardly uttered the words before Ruddock arrived with Gregory, just back from Holland.

"Yes," said Gregory in his businesslike way, "the President had recalled Gerard and given Bernstorff his passports."

We sat there in what for the moment was futile discussion of the event, wondering what we should do with the *ravitaillement*.

The next morning I drove to the Legation through bleak, deserted streets; few were abroad, save that at the King's stables on the boulevard in the fog a knot of people was gathered to watch the seizure of horses; a great round-up was in progress under the guard of Uhlans sitting their horses, with long lances and soiled pennants. At the Legation I heard that Von der Lancken had gone to Berlin, but I went to see Von Moltke. He was very grave; Lancken would not be back until Thursday, but he had left word that he hoped to see me then. They were all depressed at the Politische Abteilung—evidently they had had no notion that the President would act so promptly and so decisively. They were under no illusions as to what a rupture in diplomatic relations must lead to; Von Moltke said

it would soon be war. He could not imagine why America so misunderstood Germany, he said, as he translated the President's address for me from the German text into French; we talked a while, but to no purpose, since neither of us knew anything as yet officially.

All morning long and all that afternoon the Legation was crowded with callers asking for news, Blancas, my Argentine colleague, and Burgomaster Lemonnier among them. Villalobar was in and out, and toward evening Mr. Gregory came with M. Francqui. M. Francqui wished the men of the C.R.B. to remain and to continue their work, and even as we talked a telegram came from London, asking that I announce to the Belgian people that the *ravitaillement* would go on. And for the first time that day we smiled and shook our heads in the old hopelessness of ever making those "outside" understand the conditions under which we lived in Belgium, where there was no free public life such as the Occident knew, and where no one, except the German authorities, made public announcements.

We re-established ourselves at the Legation, which, with the confusion of callers and cards, with trunks and packing-boxes everywhere, doors fanning icy blasts on one, all the bustle of preparation to leave, was not a cheerful place. There is sadness in all parting, and there was something peculiarly saddening in this; men came to bid me good-bye, tears in their eyes as they did so; and that evening when we escaped for dinner to the Allards', our good de Sinçay, lifting his glass to propose my wife's health, made a touching little speech which he could not finish. Our situation had ever this unique quality, of which I fear I have not made enough in these pages; we were among friends who had grown very dear in the sufferings we had shared. And now that we were going that very fact made it all the harder.

But though we said good-bye we did not go. We lingered on the scene perforce, with an embarrassing sense of anticlimax. Nor could we plan to go; I was waiting for instructions from Washington and for Lancken's return from Berlin. From the anxiety and uncertainty there was no relief in work, for the news had stricken all action with a paralysis; we could only sit about and wait, while Ruddock and I wondered what to do with the cipher codes when we went, whether to burn them or risk taking them with us.

My communication with my Government and with the outside world had been suspended; my cablegrams were refused, and while we were speculating as to when and how we should go I had a telephone message from Count Harrach, saying that there was a Press dispatch from Washington which indicated that I might stay in Brussels if the Germans made no objections. Then on the heels of this unexpected news came a polite note from Count von Moltke, transmitting a package of telegrams in cipher. We seized them eagerly, and Ruddock and Herter set themselves to the task of deciphering them. We stood anxiously by, Mrs. Ruddock, my wife, Merritt Swift, an attaché lately detailed to the Legation and just arrived from Washington, and I hanging eagerly on the cipher groups as slowly they disclosed their secrets —surely the instructions would be among them! The first dispatch was from Mr. Hoover, who was in Washington, ordering the men of the C.R.B. to remain at their posts; there were other dispatches relating to other details; and then at last the one, the principal dispatch. It was very still in that room, the atmosphere of which had palpitated with so many sensations during those long months and years since, in those hot nights of August 1914, the dispatches deciphered there had come to have an interest almost historic; the words came out slowly, one after another, Ruddock swiftly turning the leaves of the code, Herter writing down the translation. Yes, it was the dispatch for which we had been watching and waiting; only it seemed strangely brief. There was some difficulty with the ciphers, but finally they decoded a sentence to the effect that the Legation and the archives and the protection of American interests were to be transferred to ——, and Herter suddenly tossed his pencil to the desk, Ruddock slammed the code book shut with a dull report, and they sat back in their chairs and laughed. The dispatch ended there. We knew no more than we knew before. It was, as it proved after the work of rectification and verification had been accomplished, a correction of some previous dispatch, one that had not reached us. So there was nothing to do but to wait.

Count Harrach called that afternoon on behalf of the Governor-General, who had just returned from Wiesbaden, and, still ill, had taken to his bed at the Château de Trois-Fontaines. Count Harrach presented the Governor-General's compliments and expressed his hope that I arrange to stay in Belgium.

" His Excellency says it would be a calamity if the *ravitaillement* were to come to an end," said the Count. " He wishes very greatly that you stay to ensure its continuance. In Germany "—he paused, looked at me a moment, and went on—" in Germany we have hardly enough to eat ourselves; we have none to give the Belgians."

Through my mind there flashed the recollection of the logical arguments of all those theorists who had spoken with such owlish wisdom of The Hague Conventions and the duty of the occupant to nourish the population.

" *On est très serré,*" the Count was saying, and he gave a little laugh as if to cover whatever embarrassment there was in the situation.

I asked the Count to make my compliments and to give my thanks to the Governor-General, and to say that I should do all in my power to aid in sustaining the work of the *ravitaillement,* but that I could say nothing definitely until I had received instructions. It was a curious sensation, finding myself at last in a position I had long anticipated and prepared for; I had thought it out in the watches of the night, and decided that in that emergency we should replace the American delegates by Dutch and Spanish delegates, and Hoover had been of that mind; thus the *ravitaillement* might go on. But now that the long-anticipated emergency had arisen my solution was not so simple. That is the way with emergencies; try how we will to prepare for them, the imagination cannot envisage all the possibilities; the expected never happens; the one thing certain of any situation is that it will never be what one thought it would be. I had never had any illusions as to that euphemism " rupture of diplomatic relations "; it meant war, soon or late, and I had felt from the beginning that it would be impossible for the Americans long to remain in Belgium; they could not safely continue their work in an enemy country. Diplomatically my position was simple enough; I had only to leave Belgium and proceed to Havre, the seat of the Belgian Government. But there was another complication; I could not go and leave the men of the C.B.R. behind. I had thought of that too, in the watches of the night. Thus, even while Harrach sat there, and after he had gone, I was turning the old problem over in my mind; the feeding of the Belgians must go on, the brave little

nation must be kept alive—and the men of the C.R.B. must be got out of Belgium.

The weather seemed to grow colder with each day, a veritable *froid de loup*, as the French say. The corridors of the Legation resounded with the sound of hammer and of saw, as Gustave packed up the archives, and there were callers in such throngs as we had not known since those August days of 1914, men asking for news, men to bid us farewell, members of the C.R.B. come to have their passports put in order. Among the callers one morning was M. Louis Franck, the eloquent deputy and Acting Burgomaster of Antwerp, the leader of the Flemish movement in Belgium. A striking man in appearance, Franck, with his full reddish beard; he could be eloquent and convincing in four languages. He came on behalf of the provincial committee of Antwerp to ask me to remain.

"Your presence will be a comfort to the people," he generously said. "They will be less hungry with you here than with you away. In remote villages in Flanders humble folk are praying to-night that you remain."

His musical voice, like some deep-toned instrument of many melodious strings, the rich, rolling accent in which he spoke French, made his plea very moving.

"*Même si le ravitaillement continue, restez parmi nous, car le réconfort moral que vous nous donnerez nous fera du bien.*"

Count von Moltke continued to send me my cablegrams, and finally the important one arrived instructing me to turn American interests over to Villalobar, to leave Belgium at once, and to proceed to Havre to take up my residence near the Belgian Government; there were many details as to closing the four Consulates in Belgium. Mr. Diederich, Consul-General at Antwerp; Mr. Johnson, Consul at Ghent; Mr. Heingartner, Consul at Liége, were to accompany me. Mr. Watts, Consul-General at Brussels, had gone to America in January and was already happily out of it all; Nasmith, Vice-Consul, was to go to Amsterdam.

But this dispatch was altered by another, a correction of the correction we had received a few days before, and thus amended it authorized me to remain in Brussels if my presence would ensure the continuance of the *ravitaillement* and it could be satisfactorily arranged.

When Lancken returned from Berlin I went at once to see

him, there in his little warm upper room overlooking the frozen snowy Park, where the poor sea-gulls were volplaning on their strong white wings over the spot where the people threw crumbs through the iron fence to them. He received me cordially, and seating himself at his littered desk said that the rupture in diplomatic relations had greatly surprised him, and as he felt again the shock of that surprise he sank back in his chair and flung up his hands, and exclaimed:

"*Et mon Dieu! à quoi bon? à quoi bon?*"

His blue eyes fixed me with their question, and he went on:

"*Je m'attendais à une protestation très forte, mais oui! Mais pas à ceci!*"

I thought that there were yet other surprises in store for those minds at Berlin that had so persistently misunderstood America and America's character, and that of her patient President, but the time was past for any explanation of mine to avail. "What of the *ravitaillement*?" I asked.

The Baron wished me to remain, and he said that the Governor-General would be grateful if I were to remain.

"But in what capacity?"

Oh, evidently not as Minister; he made that clear, but as, shall we say, Honorary Chairman of the C.R.B.? They would consent to half a dozen members of the Commission remaining to supervise the work—for instance, Gregory and Gray, perhaps Ruddock and Consul-General Diederich. He would feel in my presence an assurance and would personally assume the responsibility for my treatment. However, the freedom of the men in the C.R.B. would meanwhile be restricted; they could no longer have the use of their motor-cars. And besides, he would permit himself merely to mention the fact that, since my nation had broken off diplomatic relations with Germany, I was guilty of a diplomatic incorrection in keeping my flag flying on the Legation.

I suspected that in this last observation he had etiquette and usage on his side, but as I listened to all the rest I grew sick at heart, for under the conditions he proposed we could not with dignity remain, and I knew the processes of German official thought so well that I had little hope, after that, of our reaching an agreement that would ensure the continuance of the *ravitaillement*. The conversation, so far as any practical ends were

concerned, had been futile. I asked the Baron to put his proposal in writing, and came away.

I sent for Gregory and told him of the official attitude toward the C.R.B., and he decided to apprise Hoover of the fact by cable at once; Gray was going out to Rotterdam that afternoon, and he could send the dispatch from there. The threat to curtail the liberties of the C.R.B. was unexpected, however little there was in the rest to surprise us, for at the Vermittlungstelle Gregory had been told that all the members of the C.R.B. could remain with their privileges unimpaired, and on the strength of this assurance Gregory had already sent the seven men for the north of France back to their posts.

It was not a comfortable position in which to be placed, and we were very much undecided as to what we should do, and I recall that Ruddock, as though in search of some ultimate criterion, took down and dusted an old volume and read the Treaty of 1797 between America and Prussia, with no more satisfaction, alas! than that of the academic and perhaps patriotic pleasure we could take in the English in which Benjamin Franklin had written it.

But even the wisdom of Poor Richard was unavailing in those days; we must seek some solution for a situation which even his sagacity could not foresee.

Young Herter's problem was settled, at any rate, for that evening the Germans sent him passports to leave via Switzerland. Mr. Gerard was leaving Berlin that evening, and as Herter was attached to the Berlin Embassy he must go with his chief, and the word that accompanied the passports told Herter to go as soon as possible. He did not stand upon the order of his going, but was off by an early morning train, and though he was arrested *en route* and confined for hours in some sort of German prison or Kommandantur, he did finally, after two or three days, reach Switzerland in safety.

The written statement of Baron von der Lancken's proposal took the form of a letter addressed by him to the Marquis de Villalobar, who transmitted it to me. It was a letter in which the desire was expressed that the work of *ravitaillement* continue, that the members of the C.R.B., or some of them, remain in Belgium, and that I remain as well, though there was a sedulous avoidance of any reference to my official capacity and a marked

omission of all the official forms of respect usual in diplomacy, forms to which the Germans themselves always attached the greatest importance, and the disregard of which in their own case they would instantly have resented. There was no reason why they should continue to have diplomatic intercourse with me after my Government had expressed its unwillingness to have any further diplomatic relations with Germany. Had my position alone been involved it would all have been very simple; I should have had only to ask for my passports and go. But nothing was ever simple in Belgium; each situation there was complex, involved, complicated, novel, and without precedent. The work of *ravitaillement* which America had undertaken remained, and the need of it remained more urgent than ever, and there were three score Americans engaged in that work still in Belgium, for whose safety I was responsible. It was evident from Baron von der Lancken's letter to the Marquis of Villalobar that the first concern of the German authorities was that if the *ravitaillement* ceased and the Belgians were left to starve, the onus should not rest on the Germans, and I was equally anxious that it should not rest on the Americans, so I replied in a letter to the Marquis in which I set forth the American position as I conceived and interpreted it.*

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* POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG.
bei dem
GENERALGOUVERNEUR IN BELGIEN
V. 2676.

BRUXELLES, *le* 10 *février*, 1917.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,—La rupture des relations diplomatiques entre le Gouvernement Impérial et le Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique pourrait faire naître l'impression qu'une situation nouvelle a été créée pour l'œuvre du ravitaillement de la population civile des territoires occupés de la Belgique et du nord de la France.

Pour éviter que des malentendus ne se produisent à cette occasion, je m'empresse de faire savoir à Votre Excellence qu'une pareille opinion me paraîtrait erronée, cette œuvre jouissant du haut patronage du Gouvernement que Votre Excellence représente et de celui des Pays-Bas en même temps et au même titre que le Gouvernement des États-Unis. Si, donc, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Espagne estime devoir continuer à accorder sa haute protection à l'œuvre du ravitaillement, j'ai l'honneur d'informer Votre Excellence que le Gouvernement Impérial et que Monsieur le Gouverneur général en Belgique accorderont à l'avenir comme ils l'ont fait jusqu'ici, et en conformité avec les accords conclus, leur aide et leur protection à cette œuvre si bienfaisante pour les populations éprouvées des territoires occupées de la Belgique et du nord de la France.

La possibilité devant être envisagée que certains membres américains de la Commission for Relief in Belgium estimeront devoir retourner dans leur pays, je pense que Votre Excellence croira utile de remplacer ceux-ci par d'autres personnes qui paraîtraient, à Votre Excellence, pouvoir convenir pour cette

Then, suddenly, we were all asked to meet at the Politische Abteilung to discuss the situation. The Baron von der Lancken,

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mission, la Commission ayant été depuis sa création composée de membres neutres de nationalités diverses.

Monsieur le Gouverneur général désire toutefois soumettre à l'appréciation de Votre Excellence si Elle juge désirable que certains membres américains de la Commission for Relief continuent à exercer leurs fonctions à la direction de cette Commission à Bruxelles. Si Votre Excellence était de cet avis, Monsieur le Gouverneur général serait content de voir Monsieur Brand Whitlock consacrer aux travaux de la Commission for Relief une activité dont, je suis certain, cette institution ne se verrait privée qu'à regret ; je prierais dans ce cas Votre Excellence de bien vouloir s'entendre avec Monsieur Brand Whitlock sur la forme sur laquelle son concours pourrait rester acquis à la dite Commission.

Je prie Votre Excellence de bien vouloir me faire connaître les mesures qu'Elle compte prendre pour assurer, comme par le passé, le bon fonctionnement de l'œuvre dont Elle a bien voulu accepter le patronage et qui poursuit avec tant de succès depuis bientôt deux ans et demi, le but humanitaire et élevé d'alléger pour les populations des territoires occupés le fardeau de la guerre.

Je profite de l'occasion pour renouveler à Votre Excellence les assurances de ma haute considération.

LANCKEN.

À Son Excellence le Marquis de Villalobar,
Ministre d'Espagne, Bruxelles.

Translation

POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG
bei dem
GENERALGOUVERNEUR IN BELGIEN.
V. 2676.

BRUSSELS, *February* 10, 1917.

MR. MINISTER,—The rupture of diplomatic relations between the Imperial Government and the Government of the United States of America might create the impression that the work of provisioning the civil population of the occupied territories of Belgium and the north of France is facing a new situation.

In order to prevent misunderstanding from arising on this occasion I hasten to inform Your Excellency that such an opinion appears to me to be erroneous, since this work operates under the high patronage of the Government which Your Excellency represents and that of the Netherlands, together with and on the same basis as the Government of the United States. If then, His Majesty the King of Spain feels inclined to continue to accord his protection to the work of the *ravitaillement*, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Imperial Government and the Governor-General in Belgium will grant in the future, as they have done up to the present time, and in conformity with the engagements entered into, their aid and their protection to this work, so beneficial to the suffering populations of the occupied territories of Belgium and the north of France.

Having to envisage the possibility that certain American members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium will feel that they must return to their country, I feel that Your Excellency will believe it worth while to replace these members by other persons who appear to Your Excellency to be suitable for this mission, the Commission having been since its creation composed of neutral members of various nationalities

The Governor-General, however, desires to submit to the approbation of Your Excellency the question as to whether he considers it desirable that certain American members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium continue to exercise their functions in the direction of the Commission in Brussels. If Your Excellency were of that opinion the Governor-General would be happy to see Mr. Brand Whitlock devote to the work of the Commission for Relief an activity of which

Dr. Reith, and Dr. Brohn were there, and the Marquis of Villalobar, M. van Vollenhoven, and I. There was a new and vital

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I am certain this institution would see itself deprived only with regret; in this event I should beg Your Excellency to be good enough to agree with Mr. Brand Whitlock on the form in which his assistance could remain assured to the said Commission.

I beg Your Excellency to have the goodness to inform me as to the measures you plan to take for the purpose of assuring, as in the past, the proper functioning of the work of which you have been good enough to accept the patronage, and which has pursued with such success for almost two and a half years the humanitarian and high end of lightening for the populations of the occupied territories the burden of the war.

I profit by this occasion to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my high consideration.

LANCKEN.

To His Excellency the Marquis of Villalobar,
Minister of Spain, Brussels.

No. 602.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BRUXELLES, *le 12 février 1917.*

MON CHER COLLÈGUE ET AMI,—J'ai reçu avec plaisir votre aimable communication du 11 courant, par laquelle vous m'envoyez une lettre, datée du 10 février, de S.E. Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz. Dans cette lettre, S.E. Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz dit que "la rupture des relations diplomatiques entre le Gouvernement Impérial et le Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique pourrait faire naître l'impression qu'une situation nouvelle a été créée pour l'œuvre du ravitaillement des territoires occupés de la Belgique et du nord de la France"—et—"pour éviter que des malentendus ne se produisent à cette occasion," il s'empresse de faire savoir à Votre Excellence que "si le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Espagne estime devoir continuer à accorder sa haute protection à l'œuvre du ravitaillement, le Gouvernement Impérial et S.E. Monsieur le Gouverneur général en Belgique accorderont à l'avenir, comme ils l'ont fait jusqu'ici et en conformité avec les accords conclus, leur aide et leur protection."

S.E. Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz a l'obligeance de dire également que S.E. Monsieur le Gouverneur général désire soumettre à l'appréciation de Votre Excellence si Elle juge désirable que certains membres américains de la Commission for Relief in Belgium continuent à exercer leurs fonctions à la direction de cette Commission à Bruxelles.

Précisément, au moment où la nouvelle de la rupture des relations diplomatiques entre le Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique et le Gouvernement Impérial a été annoncée, Monsieur Hoover, Directeur de la Commission for Relief in Belgium, a fait savoir que la Commission continuerait à fonctionner et à assurer le ravitaillement de la population civile de la Belgique et de la partie occupée du nord de la France, si l'on pouvait trouver le moyen de concilier les différences qui existent entre les groupes de belligérants en ce qui concerne la route que les bateaux de la Commission for Relief in Belgium doivent suivre pour porter leur cargaison jusqu'à Rotterdam. Comme Votre Excellence le sait, en même temps que Monsieur Hoover nous envoyait cette nouvelle par télégramme, il notifiait à tous les membres de la Commission for Relief in Belgium son désir de les voir rester à leur poste jusqu'à ce que l'on trouve le moyen de sortir de la situation nouvelle.

En ce qui concerne, donc, les membres de la Commission for Relief in Belgium, puisque, d'une part, depuis le commencement de la guerre, plus de 140 Messieurs américains sont venus en Belgique pour travailler pour la Commission for Relief in Belgium sans aucune rémunération, et sans aucune récompense sauf la satisfaction d'avoir fait leur devoir dans une œuvre purement humanitaire, et que

complication : the question of the route to be taken by the ships of the C.R.B. had been raised. The Germans had insisted that

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d'autre part, leur directeur a ordonné à ceux d'entre eux, au nombre de 40 environ, qui sont actuellement en Belgique, de rester à leur poste, je suis heureux de dire que les Américains sont prêts à continuer toute leur aide et tout leur concours à cette œuvre ; et si, dans les accords que nous espérons tous voir intervenir entre les intéressés, il semble désirable que les Américains restent à la direction de cette Commission, ils le feront avec le dévouement qu'ils y ont apporté jusqu'à présent.

Evidemment, il y a d'autres questions que celles qui sont envisagées dans la lettre de S.E. Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz, c'est-à-dire celles qui concernent le fonctionnement de la Commission en dehors du pays dont la population bénéficie de l'activité de l'œuvre. Comme vous le savez, la Commission for Relief in Belgium, par ses bureaux de New-York, de Londres et de Rotterdam, et avec le concours de nombreux sous-organismes, assure l'accomplissement de sa tâche, en conduisant les bateaux à travers les mers jusqu'au port de Rotterdam. Les événements récents ont augmenté, dans la plus large mesure, les difficultés, déjà si grandes, de cette tâche : difficulté d'obtenir les bateaux et les marins, prix élevé des assurances, difficulté de tracer sa route parmi les différents champs de mines, les différentes zones dangereuses et les différentes réservations faites dans la mer par les différents belligérants, ainsi que les exigences, souvent en opposition, des différents gouvernements. Le problème est devenu aujourd'hui d'une gravité énorme.

Cependant, comme vous le savez, Monsieur Hoover, qui est à New-York, et d'autres personnes intéressées dans l'œuvre, cherchent incessamment le moyen de sortir de toutes les difficultés. Votre Excellence a même eu la bonté d'assurer Monsieur Hoover de son désir généreux de lui porter toute l'aide et tout le concours possibles, et je suis sûr que si tout le monde y met toute la bonne volonté que Votre Excellence a mise dans cette œuvre dès le commencement, nous trouverons le moyen de surmonter les difficultés actuelles et d'assurer, pendant le temps où cette guerre doit encore infliger ses maux et ses horreurs sur la terre, la continuation de cette œuvre à laquelle vous et moi avons travaillé depuis le début.

Il me paraît donc que si l'on parvient à solutionner le problème qui se pose à l'extérieur—ce que je crois et espère de tout mon cœur—puisque la Commission for Relief in Belgium est toute disposée à poursuivre son œuvre, nous trouverons le moyen d'arranger les questions qui nous concernent directement, ici dans le pays, et qui sont peut-être moins difficiles à solutionner que les autres, comme nous avons si souvent, depuis l'origine de l'organisme, trouvé le moyen de résoudre les grandes difficultés qui en étaient inséparables.

Dans sa lettre S.E. Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz a l'obligeance de dire que si certains membres de la Commission for Relief in Belgium continuent à exercer leurs fonctions à la direction de cette Commission, S.E. Monsieur le Governeur général " serait content de voir Monsieur Brand Whitlock consacrer aux travaux de la Commission une activité dont, je suis certain, cette institution ne se verrait privée qu'à regret," et il prie Votre Excellence " de bien vouloir s'entendre avec Monsieur Brand Whitlock sur la forme dans laquelle son concours pourrait rester acquis à la dite Commission."

Je suis vraiment très sensible à cette marque d'égard, et serais très heureux de continuer à apporter à l'œuvre l'intérêt et les soins que je lui ai voués depuis sa création, de toute façon compatible avec la position que j'ai l'honneur d'occuper au Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique.

Veuillez recevoir, mon cher collègue et ami, les assurances de ma haute considération et de mes sentiments les plus sincèrement dévoués.

BRAND WHITLOCK.

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Marquis de Villalobar,
Etc. etc., Bruxelles.

the ships follow the narrow passage-way which they had marked out around the northern part of the British Isles to Rotterdam,

Translation

No. 602. LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BRUSSELS, *February* 12, 1917.

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND,—I received with pleasure your kind communication of the 11th instant, by which you send me a letter, dated February 10, from H.E. the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz. In this letter H.E. the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz says that "the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Imperial Government and the Government of the United States of America might create the impression that the work of provisioning the civil population of the occupied territories of Belgium and the north of France is facing a new situation"—and—"in order to prevent misunderstandings from arising on this occasion," he hastens to inform Your Excellency that "if His Majesty the King of Spain feels inclined to continue to accord his high protection to the work of the *ravitaillement*, the Imperial Government and H.E. the Governor-General in Belgium will grant in the future, as they have done up to the present time, and in conformity with the engagements entered into, their aid and their protection."

H.E. the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz is kind enough to say also that H.E. the Governor-General desires to submit to the approbation of Your Excellency "the question as to whether he considers it desirable that certain American members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium continue to exercise their functions in the direction of this Commission at Brussels."

Precisely at the moment when the news of the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Government of the United States of America and the Imperial Government was announced, Mr. Hoover, the Director of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, made it known that the Commission would continue to function and to assure the *ravitaillement* of the civil population of Belgium and of the occupied portion of the north of France, if means could be found to reconcile the differences existing between the groups of belligerents concerning the route which the ships of the Commission for Relief in Belgium must follow to carry their cargoes to Rotterdam. As Your Excellency knows, at the same time that Mr. Hoover sent this news to us by telegram he notified all the members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium of his desire to have them remain at their posts until a way out of this new situation was discovered.

So far, then, as the members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium are concerned, since, on the one hand, more than 140 Americans have come into Belgium since the beginning of the war to work for the Commission for Relief in Belgium, with no remuneration and with no recompense whatever, save the satisfaction of having done their duty in a purely humanitarian work, and since, on the other hand, their Director has ordered those of them, about forty in number, who are actually in Belgium, to remain at their posts, I am happy to say that the Americans are prepared to continue to give all their aid and all their assistance in this work; and if, in the engagements which we all hope to see entered into between the interested parties, it seems desirable that the Americans remain in control of this Commission, they will do so with the devotion which they have thus far shown.

Obviously there are other questions than those which are envisaged in the letter of H.E. the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz—that is to say, those which concern the operation of the Commission outside of the country whose population benefits from the activity of the charity. As you know, the Commission for Relief in Belgium, through its offices in New York, in London, and in Rotterdam, and with the assistance of numerous sub-organizations, assures the accomplishment of its task of conducting the ships across the seas to the port of Rotterdam. Recent events have increased in the largest degree the difficulties, already so great, of this task: the difficulty of obtaining ships and seamen, the

and the British Government had insisted that the ships continue to touch at a British port to be overhauled for contraband. The British Government was willing to forgo this search if the ships

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increased rate of insurance, the difficulty of tracing a route among the different minefields, the different danger zones, and the different reservations made on the sea by the different belligerents as well as the demands, often in opposition, of the different Governments. The problem to-day has become one of enormous gravity.

However, as you know, Mr. Hoover, who is in New York, and other persons interested in the work, are now seeking the means of overcoming these difficulties. Your Excellency has even had the kindness to assure Mr. Hoover of his generous desire to lend him all aid and assistance possible, and I am sure that if every one displays all the goodwill that Your Excellency has shown in this work since the beginning, we shall find the means of overcoming the present difficulties and of assuring during the time that this war must yet inflict its evils and its horrors on the earth, the continuation of this work in which you and I have laboured since the beginning.

It seems to me, then, that if—as I believe and hope with all my heart—a solution of the problems which present themselves on the outside is reached, since the Commission for Relief is altogether disposed to continue its work, we shall find the means of settling the questions that concern us directly, here in the country, and which are perhaps less difficult to solve than the others, as we have so often, since the beginning of the organization, found the means of resolving the great difficulties that were inseparable from it.

In his letter H.E. the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz is kind enough to say that if certain members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium continue to exercise their functions in the direction of this Commission, H.E. the Governor-General "would be happy to see Mr. Brand Whitlock devote to the work of the Commission for Relief an activity of which I am certain this institution would see itself deprived only with regret," and he begs Your Excellency "to be good enough to agree with Mr. Brand Whitlock on the form in which his assistance could remain assured to the said Commission."

I am truly very sensible of this mark of regard and I should be happy to continue to contribute to the work the interest and the care that I have devoted to it since its creation, in any way compatible with the position that I have the honour to occupy under the Government of the United States of America.

I beg you to accept, my dear colleague and friend, the assurance of my high consideration and of my most sincere devotion.

BRAND WHITLOCK.

To His Excellency the Marquis of Villalobar
Etc. etc., Brussels.

LEGACION DE ESPAÑA EN BELGICA,
BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1917.

MON CHER COLLÈGUE ET AMI,—Je viens de recevoir votre lettre du 12 courant se référant à ma communication du 11 du même mois vous transmettant celle du 10 de Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz.

En remerciant Votre Excellence de ses bienveillantes et amicales paroles je n'ai pas besoin de lui renouveller ni mon attachement ni le dévouement que j'ai pour sa personne et pour la noble cause qui a uni dans les annales de cette horrible guerre nos deux noms et ceux de nos pays dans une seule et humanitaire idée qui a été celle de sauver de la famine sept millions d'habitants du pays auprès duquel nous nous honorons, étant accrédités, et à celle d'aider cette pauvre Belgique dans les horreurs de la guerre. Pendant trois années, mon cher collègue, nous avons travaillé la main dans la main et les cœurs hauts à cette fin, et les heureux résultats obtenus ont mérité, pour nos Patries et pour nos drapeaux,

were given safe conduct through the danger zone. And this the Germans refused.

"We are not going to have the English putting the C.R.B.

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honneurs et bénédictions. Le Nouveau Monde dont Votre Excellence représente une des plus grandes et glorieuses puissances en union étroite avec la Vieille Nation de l'Europe qui le découvrit, dont je m'honore d'être, quoiqu'indigne, le représentant, ont pu par notre fraternelle entente accomplir une œuvre qui reste au milieu de la débâcle qui nous entoure la seule internationale, la seule neutre et une de plus glorieuses de cette épopée tragique.

Elle aurait pu, aussi, accomplir une amitié étroite entre nos deux âmes et nos deux esprits, si la bonté de Votre Excellence n'avait pas suffi pour le faire d'elle-même en dehors de tout autre ordre d'idées et de considérations.

Cela bien établi je n'ai plus besoin d'ajouter l'intérêt avec lequel j'ai lu la lettre de Votre Excellence. J'en supprime tous commentaires, car une fois de plus nos deux âmes se comprennent, et n'ont point besoin de les écrire.

Néanmoins je transmettrai tout son contenu au Gouvernement du Roi, mon Auguste Maître, tandis que comme toujours, je reste tout à Votre Excellence.

LE MARQUIS DE VILLALOBAR.

À Son Excellence l'Honorable Brand Whitlock,
Ministre Plénipotentiaire des États-Unis d'Amérique.

Translation

LEGACION DE ESPAÑA EN BELGICA,
BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1917.

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND,—I have just received your letter of the 12th instant referring to my communication of the 11th instant transmitting to you that of the 10th from His Excellency the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz.

In thanking Your Excellency for his kind and friendly words I need to renew to him neither my attachment nor the devotion I have for his person and for the noble cause which has united in the annals of this horrible war our names and those of our countries in one single humanitarian idea, which has been that of saving from famine seven million inhabitants of the country to which we are honoured by being accredited, and that of aiding this poor Belgium in the horrors of war. During three years, my dear colleague, we have worked hand in hand and with high hearts, and the happy results obtained have merited honours and blessings for our countries and for our flags. The New World, of which Your Excellency represents one of the greatest and more glorious Powers, in close union with the Old Nation of Europe which discovered it, of which I am honoured to be, however unworthy, the representative, have been able, by our fraternal understanding, to accomplish a work which remains in the midst of the ruin that surrounds us the one international, the one neutral, and one of the most glorious of this epopee.

It would have been able to accomplish also a close friendship between our two souls and our two spirits if the goodness of Your Excellency had not of itself sufficed to bring that about, irrespective of every other thought and consideration.

This being well established, I have no further need to add the interest with which I read Your Excellency's letter. I refrain from all comment, for once again our two souls understand each other and have no need for written words.

Nevertheless I shall transmit all of its contents to the Government of the King, my August Master, while, as always, I remain entirely devoted to Your Excellency.

LE MARQUIS DE VILLALOBAR.

To His Excellency the Honourable Brand Whitlock,
Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

flag on their ships," said Von der Lancken, "and thus passing through the danger zone."

It was a point that could be settled only at Berlin, and we decided to invoke the services of the Spanish Ambassador at that capital.

The Baron von der Lancken disclosed a plan whereby his Government proposed to replace the American delegates by delegates of other nationality.

"The Swiss Government has offered Swiss delegates, and the German Government has accepted," he said.

But Villalobar promptly resented this as an interference.

"The German Government has nothing to do with the delegates," he said. "That is for the Protecting Ministers to decide."

There was a lively discussion between the Marquis and the Baron which I could enjoy, my new position after all not lacking its compensations. I cared little whether the new delegates were Spanish or Dutch or Swiss, if only they would come quickly and let my Americans go. The question was not settled, and when the meeting dissolved Lancken asked me to step aside with him, and we went into the little dining-room and sat down at the long table of the officers' mess, where the cloth was always spread.

"*Et maintenant*," he said, "*votre position?*"

He must know at once, must telegraph Berlin immediately—that was the impatient German way; he must have a decision on the spot, the which I told him he could not have; I would see him on the morrow.

I called on Baron von der Lancken at half-past four o'clock that next afternoon and told him that in case of war I should go at once, taking with me the members of the C.R.B., but that otherwise I was willing to remain until the American delegates could be replaced by those of some other nationality, or until the *ravitaillement* was in some other way assured, but that I reserved the right to depart on any day, with my staff, household, and servants, with all the honours and considerations due my rank, and to this he agreed.

"*Je vous le dis maintenant officiellement, comme je l'ai dit à Villalobar hier ou l'autre jour*," he said.

Then we discussed special trains—I had told him that when I went I should go via Switzerland—and the difficulties of provid-

ing them because of the military requirements, and finally Lancken, repeating and reiterating it all, as it were officially, tapping his pencil on the table as he emphasized each point:

"*Vous partirez quand vous voulez, soit demain, la semaine prochaine, ou d'ici six mois, comme si vous êtiez parti le même jour que Monsieur Gerard a quitté Berlin. . . .*"

"*Et maintenant,*" he said, taking up a long sheet of official note-paper, "*qu'allons-vous dire aux journaux?*"

I had forgotten that there were such things as *journaux* in the world—and I dictated this simple statement, which he wrote out:

"*Le Ministre d'Amérique restera provisoirement à Bruxelles pour rendre service pendant qu'on effectuera les changements dans le personnel de la C.R.B.*"

I went away thinking of Mr. Gerard, out of it all and in Switzerland.

The next day was Valentine's Day and Hoover did not forget the Germans. Gregory was at the Legation early in the morning with a copy of a long telegram brought in by the courier from Rotterdam, saying that in view of Lancken's statement that the privileges of the C.R.B. would be abridged the Americans would be withdrawn at once from Belgium, and there were business-like details about closing the books. We smiled in the pleasure the dispatch gave us; it did not lack positiveness, at least!

When we assembled again in the Louis XVI *salon*, Lancken, Villalobar, Brohn, Reith, Gregory, and I, it was to learn that the Germans already had the telegram themselves; it had come *en clair* through the Vermittlungstellen, having been duplicated thus, and intentionally, by Mr. Hoover. Lancken innocently said that he could not understand it, he did not like its reference to him, did not, it was plain, wish to be held responsible for the retirement of the Americans. I can see him now; he had the reputation of being one of the cleverest diplomats in the German service, and deserved his reputation, but as he turned toward Gregory he was blushing; he said, with evident embarrassment, that it was a very delicate matter to talk about, but that when he had spoken to me he had been under the impression that war was inevitable. He thought it, however, less likely at that moment, and with this there was a complete change of position. The delegates could do as they had done before,

precisely and in all respects, and under these circumstances Mr. Gregory said that he would recommend to Mr. Hoover that they remain. M. Francqui had been invited to the meeting, but the problem was so quickly solved that when he arrived the *dénouement* had been reached. We went outside—Villalobar, Francqui, Gregory, and I—and, on the sidewalk, M. Francqui leaned against the wall and laughed, and Villalobar said :

" Hoover is the best diplomat of us all."

The days wore on, with their constant frictions, the difficulties, embarrassments, humiliations, and dangers of a position rendered impossible by the ineluctable demands of the diplomatic situation on the one hand and the needs of the *ravitaillement* on the other. Mr. Hoover was three thousand miles away, with communications slow and difficult, out of touch and lacking knowledge of that most important element of every situation—its atmosphere. Telegrams, often in apparent conflict, orders which when they arrived were no longer applicable, came daily to perplex Mr. Gregory, and while I have never been able to bring up the long arrears of my ignorance of what was transpiring in the world outside during those trying days, I had a feeling that the most sensational stories were in circulation. The rumour got abroad that I had been ordered by the Germans to haul down my flag, and after the manner of rumours, improved itself until it depicted the Germans as tearing down my flag. A dispatch came then, instructing me that inasmuch as my privileges had been denied I was to leave, unless they and the privileges of the C.R.B. were at once restored. I went over to the Politische Abteilung to discuss the matter with Lancken. I spent two hours with the Baron in that hot little room upstairs. He was at his best that morning, courteous, smiling, pleasant.

" *Nous parlerons, d'abord,*" he said, " *en amis, et puis officiellement.*"

To begin with, he wished to correct certain misapprehensions. First, the privileges of the Americans in the C.R.B. had never been curtailed, he said, hence it was superfluous to discuss their restoration. In the second place, the English, he declared, were trying to inflame American sentiment by reports of mistreatment of the C.R.B. and of me, and to illustrate the point he made a little mock speech in imitation of some imagined British statesman excoriating the Germans as barbarians, though the imitation

lacked verisimilitude for one thing, because it was made in French. Lancken said then that they greatly desired the *ravitaillement* to continue and the Americans to remain; that it was purely an American work, and that they, the Germans, had little faith in the ability of others to carry it on. If it should be necessary in case of war—a word he did not like to utter—and he was happy to say that he thought war just then less likely than it had been—he hoped that the organization of the C.R.B. at New York, London, and Rotterdam would continue to function as it had functioned, and that if others had to come in as delegates they could replace the Americans gradually.

"But above all," he said, "we wish you to stay."

Coming at last then, as I supposed, to the point, he said:

"While we shall show you every courtesy and allow you every privilege of a diplomat we cannot officially recognize your diplomatic status because America had broken off diplomatic relations—which we were willing to continue. As to the flag, we should prefer that it be removed because we are on the eve of a great battle, the city is full of troops, we do not know what some irresponsible soldier may do, and a regrettable incident might very easily be created."

As for the courier, *Messieurs les militaires* would not consent to my having the regular courier, but I might send my courier by Villalobar's.

"*Merci*," I said, "*pour une prérogative dont je jouis déjà.*"

At this he coloured and laughed, and then said that he was going to write me a personal letter.

"*Je dois m'adresser à vous comme Monsieur Brand Whitlock, n'est-ce pas?*" and he significantly emphasized the word "*Monsieur.*"

"*Comme vous voulez*," I replied.

The letter he was going to write, he said, was to be published later in order to protect himself from any possible accusation that he had not done his best to keep the *ravitaillement* going, and I told him then that I should wait before replying to his proposal until I had his letter. And I came away after two hours' conversation that had altered very little the delicacy or embarrassment of my position.

Baron von der Lancken's letter came to me two days later,

and contained nothing that had not already been expressed in the letter he had written to Villalobar.*

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* POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG
bei dem
GENERALGOUVERNEUR IN BELGIEN,

BRUXELLES, *le 25 février* 1917.

MON CHER MONSIEUR BRAND WHITLOCK,—Après la rupture des relations diplomatiques entre le Gouvernement Impérial et le Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique j'ai, après m'être concerté avec Monsieur le Ministre d'Espagne, Protecteur de l'Œuvre du Ravitaillement, adressé à celui-ci le 10 février une lettre dont il m'a dit vous avoir remis copie. Dans cette lettre je suggérais au Marquis de Villalobar l'idée que dans l'intérêt de l'Œuvre du Ravitaillement la continuation de votre présence à Bruxelles serait désirable et je lui assurais que dans ce cas Monsieur le Gouverneur général serait heureux de vous voir consacrer aux travaux de la Commission for Relief votre activité depuis longtemps si utile à cette institution.

Dans des entretiens que j'ai ensuite eu le plaisir d'avoir avec vous à ce sujet, vous m'avez fait savoir que vous comptiez prolonger votre séjour à Bruxelles pour veiller à la continuation du bon fonctionnement de la C.R.B. De mon côté je vous avais assuré que vous pouviez toujours, à votre convenance, quitter la Belgique dans les mêmes conditions comme si vous étiez parti il y a quinze jours.

Dans ces circonstances je crois pouvoir espérer dans l'intérêt de l'Œuvre du Ravitaillement de la Belgique que votre concours restera acquis à cette œuvre humanitaire, qui grâce aux efforts des nations neutres et belligérantes exerce depuis le début de la guerre ses effets bienfaisants au profit des populations éprouvées de la Belgique et du nord de la France.

Veuillez croire, mon cher Monsieur Whitlock, à l'expression de mes sentiments les plus dévoués et sincères.

LANCKEN.

À Monsieur Brand Whitlock,
Bruxelles.

Translation

POLITISCHE ABTEILUNG
bei dem
GOUVERNEURGENERAL IN BELGIEN.

BRUSSELS, *February* 25, 1917.

MY DEAR MR. BRAND WHITLOCK,—After the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Imperial Government and the Government of the United States of America, I addressed, after having placed myself in accord with the Spanish Minister, Protector of the Work of the *Ravitaillement*, a letter to him on February 10, of which he has told me he sent you a copy. In this letter I suggested to the Marquis of Villalobar that in the interest of the work of the *ravitaillement* the continuation of your presence in Brussels would be desirable, and I assured him that in this event the Governor-General would be happy to see you devote to the work of the Commission for Relief your activity, for a long time so useful to that institution.

In the interview which I then had the pleasure of having with you, you informed me that you proposed to prolong your stay in Brussels in order to see to the continuance of the proper functioning of the C.R.B. On my part, I had assured you that you could always, at your convenience, leave Belgium under the same conditions as if you had gone a fortnight ago.

Under these circumstances I believe that I may hope, in the interest of the work of the *ravitaillement* of Belgium, that you will continue your association with that humanitarian work which, thanks to the efforts of neutral and belligerent nations, has exercised since the beginning of the war its beneficial

XLII. A DIFFICULT POSITION

THE cold weather moderated, and under the more characteristic downpour of rain Brussels might have worn its normal external air were it not for the fact that the complexion of the world about us is but the reflection of our own. I had not known, even in Belgium, such days of black care and anxiety. The whole question of my own unpleasant position aside, I was almost desperately concerned over the fate of the *ravitaillement*, and weighed by my responsibility for the safety of those forty or fifty men of the C.R.B. I had asked for written assurances that they could leave the country at any time without molestation, and while these were promised they were not forthcoming; oral assurances, it is true, had been given at the Politische Abteilung and at the Vermittlungstellen, but—with the Germans one never knew; from every interview with them, even when the most express and formal understanding and agreement had been reached, one came away with an uncomfortable feeling of uncertainty, wondering if, after all——

Brussels just then, of course, could not have been normal in any event or in any weather. Gradually during those months and years the physiognomy of the city had changed, as under the slow and for a long while imperceptible ravages of some disease changes are wrought on the visage of a friend. The town, once so gay and blithe and charming, had grown gradually sadder; now it seemed morose. We walked or drove about as of old, avid of last glimpses of the scenes we loved; in the Grand' Place on Ash Wednesday, where the women of the flower-market through all vicissitudes had clung somehow to their trade, the colours did not seem so bright. The woman whom we patronized was seated in the fog and rain beside great masses of white and mauve lilac, and her smile was only a polite adumbration of what it once had been. She used to be so buxom, so lively, so gay, so full of

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effects to the profit of the suffering populations of Belgium and of the north of France.

I beg you to believe, my dear Mr. Whitlock, in the expression of my most devoted and sincere sentiments.

LANCKEN.

To Mr. Brand Whitlock,
Brussels.

instant repartee! One day early in the war as de Leval and I, loitering in the Grand' Place, had noted a great Flemish brooch at her throat, and, recalling the visit of the German Emperor and Empress to Brussels, on which occasion the Empress had economically given a breast-pin to one of the delegation of flower-women who came to present her flowers, de Leval had asked:

"*Est-ce la médaille que l'Impératrice d'Allemagne vous a décernée?*"

And the flower-woman had retorted, in the sing-song tone that marks the true Brussels accent:

"*Humph! Si elle m'avait donné quoi que ce soit il y a long-temps que je le lui aurais renvoyé, et moi avec deux frères à l'armée belge!*"

Now she was gay no more, but sad, depressed, and her hollow cough echoed all over the square.

The shops were closed, the people were in rags, the lines at the soup-kitchens trailed their squalid miseries farther and farther down the street; the doors of the *ouvroirs*, those posts of charity where sewing was given out, were besieged by throngs of pale and patient women. The Germans had left their mark on everything in the city; its physical grace and beauty had been marred by the signs in German which they had put up at all the *aubettes*; only German newspapers and German books were sold there then, and illustrated journals with their crude and brutal cartoons with never a touch of humour, in which they were then caricaturing the President and Mr. Taft and Colonel Roosevelt. The city was crowded with soldiers *en route* for an impending butchery, being sent to the shambles like the cattle that went lowing down the Rue Belliard. And there were officers, pink and fat, racing by in motors, or insolently swaggering along the boulevard with an arrogance that had all the vulgarity of the parvenu, consciously acting parts in the inveterate *cabotinage* of the military. It was even rumoured that Brussels was to be placed in the Étape.

There was still no coal to be had, and because of the lack of it the schools were closed. . . . One of the common sights in Brussels during the severe cold weather was the long line of great rumbling carts filled with coal, jolting heavily along the Rue Belliard. The carts were guarded by German soldiers, for the coal was being put to German uses. But running behind there was always a bevy of little children with baskets picking up the

lumps that fell from the carts. Usually the German soldiers paid no attention to them, but one afternoon from my window I saw a soldier seize some lumps of coal from his cart; I thought he was going to give them to the children, but instead he threw them viciously at a little girl, who ran away in terror and cowered in a doorway; the soldier leaped down from his cart and caught the little girl, and the little boy with her, and soundly cuffed them both.

We hesitated often to go to see our friends; with such a spy system as prevailed in Brussels, we could only draw suspicion on them, perhaps involve them in difficulties after we had gone. And yet our friends came to see us; they came indeed in great numbers, especially after that blunder of a servant who promptly began distributing the "p.p.c." cards I had ordered prepared, to have them ready for the emergency that might come at any moment. They came in a kind of panic, and were relieved when they learned that the Americans were not gone.

In certain of my wanderings, my favourite bookstalls, some of the antiquarians, and shops along the Montagne de la Cour, I would be implored by the people to say that it was not true that we were going; for the report had got abroad that we were to remain, and the city was partially reassured that the *ravitaillement* was not going to collapse. And I knew that it was only a postponement; I had not the heart to tell them. Our trunks were indeed all packed, and we were in our normal attitude of sitting on our boxes; there was no official work to do after we had finished all the accounting and turned over the representation of British interests to the Dutch Legation, and that of Japanese, Serbian, Danish, and Lichtenstein interests to the Marquis of Villalobar. I had formally transferred to him as well the representation and protection of American interests, and the flag was no longer on the staff.

Cavalcanti, too, was wandering aimlessly about in the rain those days, and his belongings were packed as well, for he expected Brazil to follow soon in the way of honour America had set. And Shu Tze, the secretary of the Chinese Legation, came to see me; he had a dispatch from Peking, all very confidential, saying that China likewise would follow America's example and break off diplomatic relations with Germans; the Chinese wished to go with me when I went, and to do in all things as I did—another

expression of the confidence that China has in America as a result of John Hay's honest diplomacy.

And new problems had arisen, with myriad new complications; first of all there was the problem, vital in the circumstances, as to how the ships were to get through the submarine zone to Rotterdam. Nothing could be done until that route had been agreed upon, and to bring the German Government and the British Government into harmony on this essential point was more than difficult. Lancken had been to Berlin several times, and he came back on Washington's Birthday reporting that the German Government had refused to yield the point. There was another and ancillary problem; there were 85,000 tons of foodstuffs belonging to the C.R.B. in English ports, waiting on this decision; the Germans refused to give these ships safe conduct across the North Sea, and the British were threatening to unload the ships and seize the food. When we told the Germans that they were foolish not to allow this food to cross the infested seas there were only shrugs of shoulders and:

"*Ce sont les militaires!*"

The only suggestion they could offer was that the 85,000 tons be shipped to Holland in the regular Dutch packets that plied the North Sea, a task that would have taken years.

Alternatives were proposed; that the whole work of the C.R.B. be turned over to the Dutch Government; that it be turned over to the Swiss Government; that a new inter-Allied Commission be formed; and to each of these there was some insuperable obstacle or objection, inherent in the delicacies of the situation. And so, argument and discussion, and telegrams and cablegrams for days and days, interminable, and no conclusion—the solution would not precipitate, and my own position was intolerable and beyond definition.

"*Vous restez donc comme—chose?*" said the Nuncio one day, sitting there in his black and violet, with the vaguest of notions of how the whole matter stood.

"*Oui,*" I replied, "*comme chose.*"

XLIII. TREATMENT OF THE DEPORTED

LOOKING back upon those days I do not know how I could have got through them without the support and sympathy and

practical sense of Warren Gregory. I shall be betraying no secret now, I trust, if I say that there were times when he shared my own dark forebodings and was convinced that the men of the C.R.B. might never be allowed to leave Belgium at all so long as the war lasted. And yet he was calm and philosophic, and in his sturdy, wholesome way even classical in his consolations; he used to say, as Æneas said in comforting the companions of his hardships: "*Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*"

I have not as yet come to the place where I can vindicate his prophecy; I cannot think of those days without pain, and as in writing of them I perforce live them over, I feel again their unintermittent depression, so that I wish to hurry on and think of them no more and be done with them for ever, retaining only the friendships they brought me and the love they taught me for the charming city and its excellent people.

And yet, all things end and all problems one day are settled, and finally we did agree upon a route for the ships. Then there came a telegram saying that the Queen of the Netherlands and the King of Spain had exchanged messages, the result of which was an accord by which they would continue the *ravitaillement*; the Dutch Government had already selected the delegates who were to represent Holland in Belgium; it only remained for Spain to do the same. Thus all the other schemes received their quietus. There was food enough in Belgium on March 1 to last until May, and if we could secure the consent of the Germans to the shipment of the 85,000 tons in England belonging to the C.R.B. the situation could be saved. The C.R.B. had 100,000 tons on the seas, and had just purchased 100,000 more in New York, and when all this arrived there would be food enough for Belgium and Northern France until September—and by that time, of course, the war would be over! Villalobar said that the Germans would grant the ships in English ports safe conducts—though confidence in their assurances was somewhat weakened just then by the fact that only a few days before they had torpedoed six Dutch ships which they had promised the Netherlands Government to allow to leave Falmouth harbour. I urged that the Spanish and Dutch understudies for the delegates of the C.R.B. be brought immediately into Belgium, and asked Villalobar to secure the promised assurances in writing from the

Germans as to the immunity of our men, and Villalobar said he would procure them. The skies were beginning to clear.

In the midst of our own perplexities and with all diplomatic relations between the Germans and us broken off, we were able to do no more for the deported *chômeurs*. The annex to the Legation, as we called the unoccupied residence of the Countess Liederkerck across the street in the Rue Belliard, which we had leased and wherein were installed the corps of clerks who prepared the documents in the cases of the deported, was closed. The subject, however, was ever present, with the suffering, the misery, the despair it connoted, and now the reality of it was brought more directly to all of us by the few returning Belgians who had been repatriated. They were pitiable objects of German brutality; they were, for the most part, pale, emaciated men whose physical condition made them useless as workers, broken, maimed, helpless, hopeless; a few weeks in the slave-compounds in Germany had so reduced them by sickness, exposure, and starvation that they were hauled back to Belgium and flung down in their villages to die. Some of the returned *chômeurs* were brought to Brussels and taken to hospitals, their feet frozen from exposure, or in such a state of gangrene from maltreatment that it was necessary to amputate their legs. Those at Antwerp were returned at night to avoid notice, for their physical condition was so pitiable that the Germans seemed to be afraid or ashamed to exhibit them as examples of their work. Von Huene, the General who lost his men at Mülhausen in October 1914, and who gave the promise that if the Belgians who had fled before the fall of Antwerp returned they would not be molested, had been removed from the command at Antwerp on twenty-four hours' notice, and had been succeeded by Von Zwehl.

The deported men when they got to Germany would not work; they resorted to sabotage, "ca' canny," and "direct action"; they deliberately ruined machinery, sang their patriotic songs as they had sung them when they went away, and demoralized workshop and factory by shouting "The Lion of Flanders" at the top of their voices. And we began to hear the story of this triumph, which, when it did not cost them their lives, left them broken, ruined men.

About seventy were returned from the camp of concentration at Soltau, released because they were ill. They were transported

in a cattle-car which was attached to a freight-train, and in this condition they spent three days and three nights before they arrived at their destination, although express trains cover the distance in from six to eight hours.

At Soltau they had received as food, at six o'clock in the morning, a concoction made of acorns, with nothing else; at midday, half a litre of soup, principally of water, but with a few turnips, carrots, or beets; there were no potatoes or more substantial food; at three o'clock, 250 grammes of black bread, often mouldy; and between seven and eight o'clock, again half a litre of soup like that given at midday, but occasionally with a little bran or grits. With this abominable diet the strongest became ill, and it was not long before those with feeble constitutions died. During the first week five workmen died and two went insane. One, tired of so much misery, tried to escape and was shot down. The sufferings of these unfortunates were such that at night they would steal from the kitchens and devour the potato-skins and the waste from the turnips intended for the German personnel.

Besides the agony of such hunger every possible means was employed to compel them to sign contracts to work. One day forty workmen were taken away; eight days later they reappeared at the camp. They related to their comrades that they had been taken to the Grand Duchy of Baden, and that there for two days they had been given abundant and excellent food; they were told that if they would agree to work they would receive even better treatment. They all refused. They were then shut up in a cattle-car, where they were confined for thirty-five hours without release and without food.

Another day the deported received a visit from an individual in the uniform of a sergeant of the 8th Belgian Regiment of the Line, who began to harangue them in Flemish and in French, telling them that they were foolish to endure so much suffering while the bourgeois in Belgium continued to live well; that the Belgian Government did not care what became of them and would not intervene to help them; that the neutral nations would do even less, and that this was only natural because the neutral Governments knew very well, as did the Allies, that in accepting peaceful employment in Germany the Belgian workmen were not committing an act that could be considered as contrary to their patriotic sentiments. None of the workmen, however,

were seduced by this talk, and two days later they learned that the orator was a German disguised as a Belgian soldier.

The camp of the deported Belgian civilians was near that of the imprisoned Belgian soldiers, whose diet was a little better. The soldiers had pity on their compatriots. When a Belgian civilian was buried the Belgian soldiers were allowed to follow the coffin; although they themselves did not receive sufficient nourishment, they profited by the occasion to carry under their clothing boxes of conserve and bread, which they gave to the deported. At the camp at Soltau alone there were eleven thousand deported who refused to work for the Germans.

The story of the quarrymen of Lessines, whom the Germans by the most barbarous methods tried to compel to work for them in Belgium itself, had already become well known. Later these quarrymen had been sent to Germany, where they were put on a diet similar to that of the Soltau camp. Besides hunger, other means of duress were employed. One day they were alined before the *mitrailleuse* and told that if they did not immediately consent to work they would be shot. They replied that they would rather die from bullets than of hunger. The *mitrailleuse* did not fire. Before such splendid resistance even German persistence grew weary; some of the workmen were released and returned to their homes in such a lamentable condition that some of them died.

It seems indeed to have been the custom in the slave-compounds to menace the workmen with *mitrailleuses*. One returning group, composed of two or three hundred men of all ages, came from the camp near Münster. To force them to work their German taskmasters had almost entirely deprived them of food, had left them exposed for ten hours to cold and rain, and then, thinking that they were sufficiently reduced, they ranged about thirty of them before the *mitrailleuse*; the order to work was again given; if they refused they were to be shot down. And they all refused. The order was given to fire. They did not flinch, and the Germans fired in the air. Before such resolution it was said that some of the authorities present were not able to conceal their emotion, and that they announced to the men that they were free and could return to Belgium.

Another group returned to the Hainaut from the same camp; one of them was found dead in the train on its arrival at Mons;

about fifty were so enfeebled that they could scarcely walk and were led away from the railway-station to their homes on the arms of their relatives. And yet all of the men had been examined by German doctors before they were deported, and all of those who were not physically fit were rejected. In six weeks' time these strong, healthy, vigorous workmen had been turned to skeletons. One of the men was the son of a manufacturer at Ghlin, who had been the foreman of his father's factory where thirty workmen were employed. After an heroic resistance of thirty-five days he was no longer able to endure the food, became ill, surrendered, and agreed to work. He was set to digging, in spite of the fact that he was not physically fitted for such work, and, far from being a *chômeur*, his factory at Ghlin in the meantime had never ceased to operate.

After the protests made by the President and the King of Spain at Berlin, certain influences were set in motion in an effort to have the slave-drive in Belgium abandoned, and returning from a visit to Berlin undertaken as a result of these efforts, Lancken brought back word that if Cardinal Mercier would appeal to the Emperor, the Emperor would suspend the deportations and order the return of the men. The Cardinal, therefore, prepared and sent an appeal, signed by all the personalities in Belgium. Lancken took the Cardinal's letter to Berlin and came back with the reply. The Emperor had been graciously pleased to grant the request, the deported men were to be returned to Belgium, but—the inevitable, sinister "but" in all German negotiations—they must work for the Germans in Belgium.

But in a Lenten pastoral letter which he had written on Sexagesima Sunday and had had read in all the churches, the Cardinal had spoken out once more; he had publicly exposed the horrors of the deportations.

> Those who are fighting for the liberty of the Belgian flag [said the Cardinal's pastoral] are brave men. Those interned in Holland and Germany, who raised their fettered hands to Heaven on behalf of their country, are brave men. Our exiled compatriots, who bear in silence the weight of their isolation, also serve their Belgian fatherland to the best of their ability, as do also all those souls who, either behind the cloister walls or in the retirement of their own homes, pray, toil, and weep, awaiting the return of their absent ones, and our common deliverance.
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> We have listened to the mighty voices of wives and mothers; through their tears they have prayed God to sustain the courage and

fidelity to honour of their husbands and sons, carried off by force to the enemy's factories. These gallant men have been heard at the hour of departure rallying their energy to instil courage into their comrades, or, by a supreme effort, to chant the national hymn; we have seen some of them on their return, pale, haggard, human wrecks; as our tearful eyes sought their dim eyes we bowed reverently before them, for all unconsciously they were revealing to us a new and unexpected aspect of national heroism.

After this can it be necessary to preach courage to you?

True, there are some shadows in the picture I have sketched for you; there have been weaknesses here and there among our people, for which we must blush; I am not referring, be it clearly understood, to the handful of workmen, exhausted by privation, stiff with cold, or crushed by blows, who at last gave utterance to a word of submission; there are limits to human energy. I refer, with deep regret, to the few malefactors who lend themselves to the lucrative parts of informer, courtier, or spy, and to those misguided individuals who are not ashamed to trade upon the poverty of their compatriots. Happily, when future generations look back from the more distant standpoint of history, these stains will be blotted out, and all that will remain for their edification will be the splendid spectacle of a nation of seven millions, which, on the evening of August 2, with one accord, not only refused to allow its honour to be held in question for a moment, but which, throughout over thirty months of ever-increasing moral and physical suffering, on battlefields, in military and civil prisons, in exile, under an iron domination, had remained imperturbable in its self-control, and had never once so far yielded as to cry: "This is too much! This is enough!"

In our young days our professors of history rightly held up to our admiration Leonidas and the three hundred Spartans, who, instead of seeking safety in easy flight, allowed themselves to be crushed by the Persian army at the Pass of Thermopylæ. They filled us with enthusiasm for the six hundred heroes of Franchimont, who, after risking life and liberty by passing through the camp of the armies of Louis XI and Charles the Bold at night, all fell in an assault of almost frenzied valour and desperate resistance. The teachers of the Belgian generation of to-morrow will have yet other instances of military heroism and patriotism to evoke.*

As a result of this the Germans were once more in a rage and threatened to rescind the promise that the deportations would be discontinued. They contented themselves at last, however,

* Ceux qui se battent pour la liberté du drapeau belge sont des braves. Les internés de Hollande et d'Allemagne, qui lèvent vers Dieu, pour la patrie, leurs bras chargés de chaînes, sont des braves. Nos compatriotes exilés, qui portent, en silence, le poids de leur isolement, servent, eux aussi, du mieux qu'ils peuvent, la patrie belge, comme la servent toutes ces âmes qui, soit derrière les murs des cloîtres, soit dans le recueillement des foyers domestiques, prient, pleurent, peinent, dans l'attente du retour des absents et de notre commune délivrance.

Nous avons écouté la voix puissante des épouses et des mères; à travers leurs sanglots, elles suppliaient Dieu de soutenir le courage et la fidelité à l'honneur de leurs maris et de leurs fils, emmenés de force dans les usines de l'ennemi. On les a entendus, ces vaillants, ramasser, à l'heure du départ, leur énergie, pour

with arresting the secretary of the Cardinal and some of the priests who had read the pastoral, and on March 14 the following announcement was made in the journals in Belgium :

BERLIN, *le* 14 *mars.*

Des Belges notables appartenant aux divers partis se sont récemment adressés à S.M. l'Empereur pour le prier de mettre fin à l'envoi forcé d'ouvriers belges en Allemagne et de faire rentrer chez eux les Belges qui y ont été envoyés.

Les signataires de cette demande directement adressée à Sa Majesté viennent d'être avisés que l'Empereur a décidé de faire soumettre les désirs qu'ils ont formulés à l'examen approfondi du Gouverneur général et des administrations compétentes, lui-même se réservant de prendre une décision définitive après cet examen.

En attendant, Sa Majesté a donné l'ordre de faire rentrer immédiatement en Belgique, pour autant que cela n'ait pas été fait déjà, les Belges envoyés en Allemagne par erreur et de suspendre jusqu'à nouvel avis les envois forcés en Allemagne de Belges sans travail.*

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donner du cœur à leurs camarades, ou pour entonner, dans un effort suprême, le chant national ; nous les avons vus, à leur retour, pâles, décharnés, ruines humaines ; tandis que nos yeux mouillés de larmes cherchaient leurs regards éteints, nous nous inclinions profondément devant eux, car ils nous révélaient, sans s'en douter, un aspect nouveau, inattendu, de l'héroïsme national.

Est-il, après cela, nécessaire de vous prêcher la vaillance ?

Certes, au tableau que je viens d'esquisser, il y a des ombres ; il s'est produit, çà et là, parmi les nôtres, des faiblesses dont nous avons à rougir ; je ne vise pas, en ce moment—que l'on m'entende bien—la poignée d'ouvriers épuisés par les privations, raidis par le froid, ou broyés de coups, qui ont finalement laissé échapper de leurs lèvres une parole de soumission ; il y a des limites à l'énergie humaine ; je vise, à regret, ces quelques félons qui se prêtent au rôle lucratif de délateurs, de courtisans, d'espions, ou ces quelques égarés qui n'ont pas honte de spéculer sur la misère de leurs compatriotes. Heureusement, dans le recul de l'histoire, ces taches s'estomperont, et il ne restera pour l'éducation des générations futures, que le spectacle grandiose d'un peuple de sept millions d'hommes qui, non seulement, dans un élan unanime, au soir du 2 août, n'a pas voulu qu'on discutât, un instant, son honneur, mais, durant plus de trente mois de souffrances morales et physiques, toujours grandissantes, sur les champs de bataille, dans les prisons militaires et civiles, en exil, sous une domination de fer, demeure imperturbablement maître de soi, et ne s'est pas encore une seule fois laissé aller à dire : " C'en est trop ! C'en est assez ! "

Dans nos jeunes années, nos professeurs d'histoire nous faisaient admirer, et c'était justice, Léonidas et les trois cents Spartiates, qui, plutôt que de chercher leur salut dans une fuite aisée, se firent écraser par l'armée des Perses, au défilé des Thermopyles. Ils nous enthousiasmaient pour les six cents braves du pays de Franchimont qui, après avoir la nuit, en y engageant leur liberté et leur vie, traversé les camps des armées de Louis XI et de Charles le Téméraire, succombèrent tous dans un assaut d'une audace presque folle et d'une résistance désespérée. Les maîtres de la génération belge de demain auront à citer des traits autrement évocateurs de l'héroïsme militaire et du patriotisme.

BERLIN, *March* 14.

Certain Belgian notables belonging to various parties have recently addressed H.M. the Emperor urging him to put an end to the forced deportation of Belgian workmen to Germany, and to have returned to their homes those Belgians who have been sent away.

The subscribers to this demand addressed directly to His Majesty have just

The condition that they work on their return, which at first was so deeply resented, proved in the end to have only an academic interest, for few ever came back to Belgium except those sent home to die

XLIV. AT THE NATION'S SOUL

WE supposed, however, that with the Imperial promise the deportations had come to an end, and that we could indulge the natural feeling of relief that would come with the passing of the worst of the horrors the Germans had brought to Belgium. And yet, almost unnoticed, in those days of anxiety and care, there were being enacted the opening scenes in a tragedy that transcended any yet played in Belgium, the preparation for a deed worse than the atrocities, worse than the Cavell case, worse than the deportations. These were of that sensational nature and of that stark objectivity which instantly shock the imagination. But this went deeper, was far more subtle and insidious. The atrocities, the deportations, and the rest destroyed the body; this was an attempt to destroy the soul; they murdered men; this would assassinate a nation.

On March 3, or about that time, the German newspapers announced that the administration in Belgium would be divided; then ten days later the German newspapers were filled with accounts of a "visit" to Berlin of a group of Belgians, soi-disant leaders among the Flemish, gone to present a petition to that end. Preoccupied by my own problems and perplexities, I paid little attention to this at the time; it was mentioned now and then, but we were thinking and talking of other things. Then on March 21 there appeared on the walls of Brussels a small *affiche*:

ORDER

There are formed in Belgium two administrative regions, one of which comprises the provinces of Antwerp, Limbourg, East and West

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been informed that the Emperor had decided to submit the petition which they formulated to the careful examination of the Governor-General and of the competent administrations, reserving to himself the privilege of taking a definite decision after this examination.

In the meantime His Majesty has given orders to have returned immediately to Belgium, in so far as this has not already been done, those Belgians sent to Germany by mistake, and to suspend until further orders the forced deportation to Germany of unemployed Belgians.

Flanders, as well as the districts of Brussels and of Louvain, the other of which comprises the provinces of Hainaut, Liége, Luxembourg, and Namur, as well as the district of Nivelles.

The administration of the first of these two regions will be directed from Brussels; that of the second from Namur.

All arrangements looking to the assurance of the execution of the present order, notably from the point of view of the administrative organization of the two regions and the transfer of the control, are reserved. For all that concerns the Ministry of Arts and Sciences, the orders of October 25, 1916, December 13 and February 14, 1917 (*Official Bulletin of Laws and Orders*, pp. 2930, 3054, and 3319), remain in force until the publication of the above-mentioned arrangements.

The Governor-General in Belgium,
FREIHERR VON BISSING,
Generaloberst.

BRUSSELS, *March* 21, 1917.*

This order was the culmination of a carefully nurtured scheme of Von Bissing's, not only for the conquest, but for the political agglutination of Belgium, the goal of that policy of appealing to race prejudice already revealed in the transformation of the University of Ghent. It had been cunningly devised and deeply meditated for long months; its details had been studied with Machiavellian subtlety in the department of the Politische Abteilung and the Zivilverwaltung, and while he was taking the cure at Wiesbaden, Von Bissing had matured it; now, on his return, he promulgated it. The moment, as it proved, was hardly auspicious, and revealed the reason why Von Bissing had been so opposed to the deportations—not as a principle, but as a policy—and why he had quarrelled, or at least differed, with Hindenburg. Von Bissing and his advisers just then affected

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ARRÊTÉ

Il est formé en Belgique deux régions administratives dont l'une comprend les provinces d'Anvers, de Limbourg, de Flandre orientale et de Flandre occidentale, ainsi que les arrondissements de Bruxelles et de Louvain, l'autre les provinces de Hainaut, de Liége, de Luxembourg, et de Namur, ainsi que l'arrondissement de Nivelles.

L'administration de la première de ces deux régions sera dirigée de Bruxelles; celle de la deuxième, de Namur.

Sont réservées toutes les dispositions qui seront destinées à assurer l'exécution du présent arrêté, notamment au point de vue de l'organisation administrative des deux régions et de la remise des affaires. Pour tout ce qui concerne le ministère des sciences et des arts, les arrêtés des 25 octobre 1916, 13 décembre 1916 et 14 février 1917 (*Bulletin officiel des lois et arrêtés*, pp. 2930, 3054, et 3319) restent en vigueur jusqu'à la publication des dispositions susmentionnées.

Der Generalgouverneur in Belgien,
FREIHERR VON BISSING,
Generaloberst.

BRUXELLES, *le* 21 *mars* 1917.

la manière douce, which Hindenburg and his leaders could neither tolerate nor understand.

It was always referred to as *la séparation administrative*, a phrase that hardly illustrates its own sinister and tragic significance. It meant more, of course, than a mere division of the prosaic functions of the civil administration of the kingdom; it involved the establishment of two administrations where one had served before, one that had been in operation for more than eighty years and was an integral part of a most practical system of government. The Hague Convention made it incumbent on the German occupant to respect the laws in force in the country, the only exception recognized by that Convention being that of "absolute necessity." There had been no absolute necessity for innovation; the Belgian internal administration had carried on, as the English say, under German occupancy for more than two years. The functionaries had continued at their posts at the express invitation of General von Bissing himself, and with a promise that they would not be molested.

On January 4, 1915, the Chief of the Civil Administration, Dr. von Sandt, had formally communicated to them a statement of the Governor-General informing them that he would leave it to Belgian functionaries "to decide freely whether they were able to reconcile the future exercise of their functions with their duty toward the Belgian State," assuring them that those who should resign their functions would have no reason to fear any result other than the loss of their salaries, "providing they had done nothing in the pursuance of their duties and obligations that was against the interests of the German administration." This striking generosity was supererogatory even if elementary rules of justice did not give a man the right to quit his employment, for that right had already been expressly secured by Article 43 of the regulations annexed to The Hague Convention of 1907.

In that dark winter of 1914, the first of the war, we used to hear that the Germans were only waiting to take Ypres and *nettoyer le pays là-bas*, before declaring the annexation of Belgium; the Kaiser was said to have prepared an imposing theatrical ceremony to be unrolled in the old Cloth Hall as soon as the city should fall. But that performance was deferred and another annexation was conceived as a substitute for the geographical conquest, to accomplish which it was necessary to destroy the

national organization and in its place to erect two organizations, one Flemish and the other Walloon. Whether Belgium were formally annexed or not, this procedure would divide the people, break the national spirit, and dismember the nation; it was a part of the unaltered purpose of the military oligarchy and the Pan-Germanists to create the Mittel-Europa, a purpose from which for an instant they had never swerved; they would first separate the Flemish provinces from Belgium and then attach them to the Empire, thus gaining the great port of Antwerp and the Belgian littoral.*

The Germans knew, of course, in every detail, the historic feeling between the Flemish and the Walloons, and they were no sooner installed in Belgium than they set about the congenial task of profiting by the fact. The idea of separating the admini-

* After Governor-General von Bissing's death in 1917 there was published a document that purports to be a memoir left by him in which he sets forth his views of the future of Belgium, of Germany, and of the world in general. The authenticlty of this document, so far as I know, has never been authoritatively denied. In it Baron von Bissing says:

"I propose to develop here an opinion already expressed by me in a previous memoir. I wish to speak of the cruel necessity, or rather the sacred duty, imposed on us of keeping Belgium under our influence and our domination, because the security of Germany demands that we do not render Belgium her liberty."

The Governor-General in his memoir was without illusions. He said that there was no hope of reconciling the Belgians, and that in spite of all treaties that might be obtained, Belgium would remain inimical to Germany. He develops his theory of the use Germany could make of Belgium, not only industrially, but as an outpost against England in that future war of which he speaks, as though it were already an actuality. He says that after the conclusion of peace they, the Germans, cannot permit Belgium to be resuscitated as a State and as a neutral country, and adds:

"An independent Belgium, a neutral Belgium, or a Belgium whose status is fixed by treaties, will be, as prior to the war, subject to the baneful influence of England and of France, and will be the prey of America, which seeks to utilize Belgium's resources. In order to prevent that there is but one means and one policy: FORCE; and it is to force that we must again resort in order to compel the present population, still hostile, to accommodate itself to German domination and to submit to it.

"Germany is interested also in the Flemish movement in Belgium, which has already gained considerable ground and which would be mortally affected if we did not extend to Belgium our policy of force."

The late Governor-General goes on:

"And this has great weight also in determining the future external policy of Holland, for as soon as we withdraw our protecting hand from Belgium the Flemish movement will be branded as Germanophile by the Walloons and the Francophiles, and completely crushed by them. The Flemish problem is not solved yet by any means, and I do not cherish the optimistic hope that the Flemings will aid us in our domination of Belgium. From now on we must do everything in our power to divert into the proper channels the unrealizable hopes that are beginning to overflow. A certain Flemish group dreams of an autonomous Flemish State, governed by a king and entirely separate from any other State.

strations, like that of transforming the University of Ghent, was not original with them; few ideas are; they are better at adapt-

Of course we must protect the Flemings, but we cannot in any event or under any consideration allow them to become altogether independent."

The memoir says:

"Belgium must be conquered by us and we must retain it as it is at present and as it must remain in the future. We must retain in Belgium for many years to come the state of despotic control which is actually in force.

"That despotic control, based on military force, is the sole administrative system that can be chosen; but we shall work out reforms in the future, slowly and methodically, and install a new form of government more appropriate to the interests of Germany."

As I say, the authenticity of this document has not been entirely proved, though it is not difficult to imagine the old Prussian General writing such a memoir. It was printed in Herr Bacmeister's review, *Das Grössere Deutschland*, and in the *Bergische Markische Zeitung*. Herr Bacmeister, the publisher of the first-mentioned magazine, has issued a statement in response to some rival publication which, while not contesting the authenticity of Von Bissing's memoir, claimed that the late Governor-General in Belgium had changed the opinions expressed in it before his death. Herr Bacmeister's statement contends, with some truth it would seem, that it would be impossible to diminish the significance of the Von Bissing document, and he adds that he is authorized to declare that Von Bissing "to the day of his death invariably held the opinions that he expressed in his memoir." But whether the memoir is authentic or not, there is another document the authenticity of which cannot be disputed, and which goes even further than the memoir.

In January 1917 Baron von Bissing, being ill and at Wiesbaden taking the cure, wrote to Dr. S. Stressemann, a member of the Reichstag and lately appointed by the Chancellor as a member of the Consulting Commission of Seven, the latest triumph of the democratic movement in Germany. The letter that Baron von Bissing wrote is dated January 14, 1917, and was published in the *Deutsche Tagezeitung* for May 30, 1917. Von Bissing writes to congratulate Herr Dr. Stressemann on a lecture he had just delivered at Hanover on German victory and German peace, and is delighted to approve what the speaker had said as to the future of Belgium. In the letter Von Bissing refers to a memoir in which he says he studies at greater length and more precisely and profoundly the future of Belgium, and the assumption is that this is the memoir mentioned above.

But in the letter itself he says:

"If we do not subject Belgium to our power, if we do not orient its politics toward a German goal, if we do not use Belgium for the best interests of Germany, then the war for us will have been lost.

"For two years my policy has been guided by these considerations of the future. I have sought always noiselessly to weave binding ties and often those ties have been severed. But of all the attempts at *rapprochement*, however futile, something subsists, though it be in the deepest mystery. You will see what fruits this policy will bear as soon as, in order to reimburse itself for the heavy sacrifices it has made so as to assure the guarantees without which it cannot ensure its future, Germany, not knowing how to surrender, will decree the annexation of Belgium on the basis of the right of conquest."

And he goes on:

"These thoughts have inspired my Flemish policy; it is guided by these thoughts that I have directed with a wide reserve and moderation my religious policy. Doubtless it would have been easier for me to have recourse to the means of *Kulturkampf*, but we shall have need of the Church if we wish one day to impose on Belgium the German spirit and German initiative.

"These words, which your brilliant lecture alone could have inspired, are those of a man who knows not whether the state of his health will permit him

ing than originating. *La séparation administrative* was an old notion in Belgium, and since it lent itself so readily to demagogy

to return to his post where await him such heavy responsibilities. If, however, God, our Lord, will give him back his strength, you may be assured that those who, like you, have understood with penetration what the future of Germany demands with reference to the problem of Belgium, and have set it forth as clearly as you have in your lecture, will always find in me a staunch supporter.

"I am still feeble and ill and I cannot write or even think as I hope to be able to do before long, when, after this long vacation which His Majesty the Emperor in his confidence has been kind enough to grant me, I shall be sufficiently restored to be able to govern Belgian affairs in his name and after his will."

He was restored, at least partially, to health, and returned to Brussels to "install a form of government more appropriate to the interests of Germany."

The memoir in full is as follows:

It is a curious fact that in enemy countries, in France and England particularly, the men at the helm express themselves quite freely regarding their war aims, in spite of the reverses suffered on the various fronts. As at the outbreak of this world-war, which is constantly extending its scope, so to-day the parcelling-out or annihilation of Germany is demanded; and this although German armies have made victory a matter of habit, as it were, and are in firm possession of huge expanses of enemy country.

Without paying the slighest heed to the military situation, or hesitating at the sacrifice of treasure and men to which the Powers allied against us vainly committed themselves, the anti-German Press is without exception blinded by a strange kind of self-hypnotism. The extravagance of the war aims of our opponents, who set as little value on our own successes as on those already won by our allies, obviously makes it impossible to dream of a peace in the near future which shall be both honourable and acceptable to Germany.

To defend our independence and to assure our future, Germany must continue the struggle until the time when with sword in hand she can exact a peace, a peace which shall be effective and, if possible, durable. And it is then only that it will be suitable to speak of the character of our conditions of peace; such is, contrary to that of our enemies, the opinion of many Germans, the Chancellor of the Empire among others. As for convincing those circles in which peace is now desired, either because they maintain the illusion of a possible reconciliation, or because they are nervously impatient of a peace which, being premature, cannot but be ephemeral, I do not believe that it can ever be done.

In those circles where only social-democrats meet they misunderstand the sentiments inspiring our people to finish the task that has been begun, while at the same time exaggerating the force of resistance of England. Thus they seem to believe that England will never decide to talk of peace so long as we shall not have evacuated and re-established in the position it occupied prior to the war, Belgium, which after fierce struggles and innumerable sacrifices we have succeeded in almost entirely conquering.

I do not wish to be led here to discuss the invincibility of England. Her world-empire is already threatened; it becomes daily more and more evident that in the West and in the East she is at present wounded in her vital organs. Does England nevertheless possess a power so great that, concentrating it upon us, she can snatch Belgium from us, force us again to surrender Belgium to Franco-British influence, and, finally, provide that in the future our country regain its primitive boundaries and frontiers, which, instead of extending to the Channel, shall be withdrawn to the frontier of Belgium? I do not wish to discuss that here.

I propose to develop here an opinion already expressed by me in a previous

it was precisely the sort of thing that appeals to your small politician, who is always confusing sectionalism and particularism

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memoir. I wish to speak of the cruel necessity, or rather the sacred duty imposed on us of keeping Belgium under our influence and our domination, because the security of Germany demands that we do not render Belgium her liberty.

I suppose, of course, that the firm hope I have of seeing the force of arms bring about a decision in our favour will become a reality. But at present we must convince ourselves of this: a Belgium restored to independence—whether she is declared neutral or not—will be included among our enemies; not only will she be impelled to do so by an inevitable sense of necessity, but they will draw her to them. I take for granted that we may hope for a reconciliation—mythical, to my mind—and that we may, by means of as good treaties as possible, obtain guarantees; it cannot be denied, however, that from every point of view Belgium will be organized and utilized by our enemies as a TERRITORY of offensive and of advanced posts.

The following considerations will show what is, in view of a future war, the strategic importance of Belgium. In order to conduct the present war in an offensive manner the high command of the army was obliged to march through Belgium, but the right wing of the German army was not able to advance along the border of the Dutch province of Limbourg except with great difficulty. Strategically speaking, the objective pursued during the present war on the Western Front was to find a space where we might march our army against France and England in a war the circumstances of which would all be new.

If the result of the present war should be to leave an independent Belgian State it would be necessary in a subsequent war to conduct the operations in an entirely different manner and with much greater difficulty than in the beginning of the present war, for the whole effort of England and France would tend to outdistance the German army with the aid of a Belgium either allied to them or entirely under their influence. It is permissible to ask oneself whether it would then be possible to safeguard the liberty of action of the German right wing, and even if in another war we could again take the offensive.

The present war has also proved, furthermore, that the possession of a defensive territory beyond the Rhine is essential. The present frontier of the Empire does not suffice. A Belgium supported by English and French forces would immediately threaten our industrial regions, which, by reason of their factories, are indispensable for supplying the needs of the army. Besides, England, if she dominated Belgium in peace-times, would not hesitate to force Holland—as Greece has recently been forced to do—to abandon her neutrality, or to bow to the exigencies of England's military operations. It is up to us, therefore, to protect our industrial regions—without whose aid we cannot conduct the war to a successful finish—by distant lines of defence, and to safeguard the freedom of action of our right wing by widening, as much as is necessary, the territories over which our offensive can deploy.

Before leaving the military and strategic view-point it is necessary that I draw attention to the great value of the industrial territory of Belgium, not only in peace-time but also in time of war. A Belgium neutral, or under Franco-English influence, by means of its munitions factories, its metallurgic industry, its coal-mines, increases the fighting power and the forces of resistance of a country, just as our own industrial regions do. That is why it is absolutely necessary to prevent Belgian industry from aiding the armament policy of our adversaries. The extra advantages that we have derived from Belgium during this war by the seizure of machinery, etc., should be considered as much as the injury caused the enemy, deprived of this increase of fighting power.

If we consider the importance of Belgium to us as a *terrain* where our armies can deploy for an attack, and favourable during future operations for offensive or defensive warfare, there can be no doubt that a frontier limited to the line of the Meuse, where some misguided ones would establish it, and protected by the fortresses of Liége and Namur, cannot suffice for Germany. It is necessary

with democracy. But it had never excited a serious general interest, and when the war came on was moribund. The Germans,

on the contrary, to push the frontier to the sea, as our maritime interests, moreover, demand.

The Belgian industrial region is important for the conduct of the war, but that is not its sole importance. Without the coal, what would have become of our policy of exchange with Holland and the northern countries? The twenty-three million tons extracted annually from the Belgian coal-fields have given us on the Continent a monopoly which has contributed to assure our existence.

In addition to these factors, which must be considered in view of a future war, one must also consider that even in peace-time it is of priceless importance for us to safeguard our economic interests in Belgium. A Belgium having again become independent will never again be neutral, but will submit, on the contrary, to the protection of France and of England

If we do not seize Belgium, if in the future we do not govern it to the best of our interests and do not protect it by force of arms, our industry and our commerce will lose the place they have won in Belgium and undoubtedly they will never be able to recover it.

German interests in Antwerp will be compromised from the time that Germany relinquishes Belgium, for without any doubt that country will enter into closer relations with England and France as soon as it feels free once more.

The Belgian Government and its politicians who have taken refuge in London are always openly working in that direction We should not desire, of course, to kill Belgian industry, but by special laws we must impose on it the same conditions as those controlling German industry. We can thus make use of Belgian industry as a lever to play upon the world-market and there fix prices. With Antwerp we should not only lose the port, the possibility of controlling railroad rates, etc., but also the great influence that this city possesses as a world-market and financial centre, in South America especially. These forces will also be turned against us, very naturally, as soon as they can be freely utilized.

It has now become a matter of history that neither before nor at the outbreak of this war could Belgium be expected long to remain neutral, and, if one is to attach much importance to these historical truths, it is not admissible that on the conclusion of peace Belgium should be resuscitated as an independent State and neutral country. An independent Belgium, a neutral Belgium, or a Belgium whose status is fixed by treaties, will be, as prior to the war, subject to the baneful influence of England and of France, and will be the prey of America, which seeks to utilize Belgium's resources. In order to prevent that there is but one means and one policy: FORCE; and it is to force that we must again resort in order to compel the present population, still hostile, to accommodate itself to German domination and to submit to it.

Germany is also interested in the Flemish Movement in Belgium, which has already gained considerable ground and which would be mortally affected if we did not extend to Belgium our policy of force. Many Flemings are openly our friends and many more also, who still conceal their sentiments; all are ready to associate their interests with those of Germany throughout the world. And this has great weight also in determining the future external policy of Holland, for as soon as we withdraw our protecting hand from Belgium the Flemish Movement will be branded as Germanophile by the Walloons and the Francophiles, and completely crushed by them. The Flemish question has not been solved yet by any means, and I do not cherish the optimistic hope that the Flemings will aid us in our domination of Belgium. From now on we must do everything in our power to divert into the proper channels the unrealizable hopes that are beginning to overflow. A certain Flemish group dreams of an autonomous Flemish State, governed by a king and entirely separate from any other State. Of course we must protect the Flemings, but we cannot in any event or under any consideration allow them to become altogether inde-

however, sent their *agents provocateurs*, manipulators, and agitators through the land to try to revive the issue, and with the exag-

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pendent. Being of German extraction, as opposed to the Walloons, they will be a precious asset for the German race.

Belgium must be conquered by us and we must retain it as it is at present and as it must remain in the future.

In order fully to assure our future position we must devise for the Belgian problem as simple a solution as possible. If we abandon a portion of Belgium, or if we erect an autonomous State on Belgian territory, we do not only create for ourselves considerable difficulties, but we also deprive ourselves of the very important advantages and of the assistance that Belgian territory can give us only if in its entirety it is subjected to German administration,

If for no other reason than to give our fleet a base of supply and to prevent the isolation of Antwerp from the commercial centres, we must exact all the territory contiguous to that city.

After a century we are going to be given an opportunity, on the conclusion of peace, to correct the errors made by the Congress of Vienna. In 1871 we corrected one of them by annexing Alsace-Lorraine, which Prussia had formerly claimed. At present there must be no more errors committed; we must act without timidity and without any ulterior thought of a reconciliation.

If in order to oblige England to show us sufficient respect, we show a total lack of consideration and firmness, if we weaken, if we withdraw to the line of the Meuse or conclude some sort of an agreement concerning Antwerp, the whole world will consider us weak, the great results we have obtained in the Balkans will be minimized, and, in spite of the importance of our military successes, our fame will suffer in Turkey and throughout the whole of Islam.

There is but one means of forcing the English to recognize us as equals; that is to stay in Belgium. England cannot remain mistress of the Belgian coast. We must prevent her from dominating a territory whence a new Franco-English offensive might be launched one of these days, and it would be an overwhelming one this time. I have the firm conviction that once out of Belgium, not only would Franco-English influences prevail, but also the English and French troops would effect their junction there; that is to say, in a future war more than a million men will be ready immediately—on the defensive or to attack our present frontier or on the line of the Meuse.

I shall confine myself to outlining rapidly and in its broad lines to what extent our interior policy is interested in the Belgian problem. The great majority of the people would not understand our giving up Belgium after its having been a long time in our hands, and that we should relinquish the fruits of a victory so dearly won. The war will have cost us at least a million men in the prime of life; our industries will find themselves deprived of many of their strongest arms. The people are entitled to see the realization of their hopes. Furthermore, we should see a greater and more active opposition created should those expectations not be fulfilled. Already our diplomatic reserves of the last twenty years have made a very unfavourable impression upon the people; the fear is more and more openly expressed that once again diplomacy will lose for us what we have won by the sword. This time, after such enormous sacrifices, we cannot run the risk of hearing such reproaches. We must attain that war objective which at home even the lowliest being considers absolutely certain of attainment.

It is not only a question of formulating a minimum of conditions with regard to Belgium that military interests impose on us, but positively to ensure in the future the life of the people and of the German Empire.

Whosoever, like me, with entire conviction and with all his energy, conducts a campaign in favour of the annexation of Belgium, is in duty bound also, in order completely to justify his passionate desire, to outline to himself the difficulties to be surmounted and the objections to be combated. For my part, I do not consider the reasons of those who, losing themselves in dreams, judge

gerated solicitude and gross flattery of the seductor tried to win the confidence of the Flemish. In the minds of the intelligent

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that the Government is bound by the declarations it made at the outbreak of the war. Of course we did not undertake the war in a spirit of conquest, but solely to defend the Fatherland. The conquest of Belgium was directly forced upon us, and it was considerations affecting the possibilities that lie in the future that led us logically to demand, in the name of our security, that the frontiers of Germany be extended to the west.

Certain people maintain that Germany must be kept free from every foreign element, and that it would affect the powerful unity of Germany to incorporate so many millions of inhabitants of another country differing in language. These are but empty phrases. Germany has nothing to fear; Germany will remain German even though we draw Belgium into our midst; besides, it is thickly peopled with Germans, for the Walloons themselves became French only through the action of time. It will suffice if we see to it that the German spirit and courage become implanted there where French influences pursued the work of Frenchification. Obviously, it is a great and difficult problem to enlarge Germany, to subject Belgium to her rule, and to absorb the latter country; but Germany is strong enough, and after the war she will find, I hope, capable men to solve in a German sense the problems that will arise in Belgium, and to solve them more happily than they were solved in Alsace-Lorraine. At least the faults previously committed will have taught us something, and we shall never return in Belgium to that policy of weakness and of reconciliation that was so injurious to us both in Alsace-Lorraine and in Poland.

Of course, it must be a brain-wracking dilemma for the diplomatists and the jurists to determine what form the annexation of Belgium should take, and many times have we asked one another, "With whom shall we conclude a peace sanctioning in law the right of conquest?" And indeed that question is not easily answered. Up to the present neither the Belgian Government nor the King has agreed with the Quadruple Entente not to sign a separate peace. But in spite of this reservation, from which there will undoubtedly be a departure in the near future, we shall never be able to conclude with the King of the Belgians and his Government a peace by which Belgium would remain under German domination, and the Quadruple Entente cannot agree to our conditions of peace relative to Belgium, its ally. Therefore we can only refuse, during peace negotiations, to discuss the manner in which we shall incorporate Belgium.

We shall limit ourselves to asserting *the right of conquest.*

Obviously, one must not disregard the dynastic point of view, for in so doing, in justice and without concerning ourselves with idle considerations, we dethrone the King of the Belgians and allow him to remain abroad, an enemy full of ill-will. We must arrive at some decision in this respect, and perhaps it were better to conclude that it is so much to our advantage, if necessity does not force us to dwell too long on the dynastic view-point. A king will never voluntarily abandon his country to the conqueror, and the King of the Belgians will never resign himself to the surrender of his sovereignty or consent to its restriction. His prestige would be so affected that he could no longer be considered an aid to German interests, but a nuisance. The English for a long time and in divers circumstances maintained that the right of conquest is the sanest and simplest, and in Machiavelli's writings one may read that whosoever proposes to seize a country is obliged to rid himself of the king or government, even by murder.

These are certainly very serious resolutions to adopt, but they must nevertheless be adopted, for it is a question of the welfare and future of Germany, and besides, a war of extermination waged against us calls for expiation. We must retain in Belgium for many years to come the state of despotic control which is actually in force.

That despotic control, based on military force, is the sole administrative system that can be chosen; but we shall work out reforms in the future, slowly and methodically, and install a new form of government more appropriate to

and responsible Flemish leaders such clumsy methods, of course, produced no feeling but disgust, but a few men were influenced to play the traitorous rôles for which the Germans cast them.

The movement, then, for the separation of administration opened with a comedy staged at Berlin. The four or five Flemish men, as a commission representing the Flemish people, "went," as I have said, to Berlin with their petitions. Inasmuch as no one could go from one town to another in Belgium, much less to Germany, without appealing to the Kommandantur for days and sometimes for weeks in order to obtain the necessary passports, which besides were seldom granted, and inasmuch as the Belgian people were not allowed to assemble or to hold public discussions,

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the interests of Germany. The annexation of Belgium, based upon the right of conquest, will be viewed by many Flemings and by a goodly number of Walloons as a release from doubt and vain hopes. One and the other can then breathe freely, do business, and enjoy life. The Flemings, whose nature is so independent, and who, furthermore, are difficult to manage, will find it easy to adapt themselves, on coming out of the state of tyranny, to a transitory state of things from which liberty for them will arise.

The Walloons can and must decide during that period whether they desire to adapt themselves to the new circumstances or whether they prefer to leave Belgium. Whoever remains in the country must recognize Germany, and, after a certain time, confess to *Deutschstum* (allegiance to Germany).

As a result of this it will be impossible to tolerate that while wealthy land-owners emigrate they continue to derive income from their Belgian properties. In order to avoid in Belgium the creation of a situation analogous to that existing in Alsace-Lorraine, it will be necessary at all costs to have recourse to expropriation. Happily, we are not only powerful with the sword, but our statesmen have clear vision and know how to govern intelligently. Above all, half-way measures must be condemned and no attention paid to the possible wounding of susceptibilities. In these decisive days of German history it would be committing an injustice, fraught with the gravest consequences to those who have died for us, to be irresolute.

It would be, for instance, a half-way measure to treat Belgium as a hostage and not to reconquer, perhaps even increase by means of her aid, our colonial empire. One thinks first of all of the Belgian Congo, and undoubtedly its possession would be of immense value to us. Speaking generally, I am strongly of the opinion that a colonial empire is necessary for Germany as a solid basis for her power and to allow her to develop a world-wide policy, and it is of slight importance over what regions this empire extends.

But the empire will not have its real value for us unless new frontiers afford us greater freedom on the seas. The partisans of a colonial policy must therefore also insist that we be given the Belgian coast-line, with the territory contiguous to it, for if we relinquish this, our fleet will lack important bases from which to undertake the efficient defence of our colonies.

It is, I realize, a great scheme to propose to keep all of Belgium for Germany, and to annex it under one form or another. It is a great goal that can be attained only by a courage ready for every sacrifice, and by clever energy at the time of peace negotiations. Let us take inspiration from that phrase of Bismarck (to which Bismarck gave such significance): "As in every walk of life so it is true in politics, that faith removeth mountains, that courage and victory have not the relationship of cause and effect, but are identical."

and as they had no Press, it is easy to imagine just whom and what these men represented. They were received by the Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, as we read in the German newspapers, and he made a speech in which he extended to the "delegates" a cordial welcome to the capital of the German Empire in "their quality of representatives of a people so closely united to the German people by political, economical, and intellectual ties." He referred to the "community of ideals which prevails between the two peoples," and assured them that "the confidence with which they had approached him had found a vibrating echo in his heart." He went on to express the wish that "in the midst of a bloody struggle Germans and Flemish might remember that the bitter fight against the encroachments of the Latin race should lead them to the same end."

"We have still before us many struggles and much labour," he said, "but that does not prevent me from extending to you my hand, that we may combat together our common enemy."

Continuing, the Chancellor said that "His Majesty, animated only by his esteem and compassion for the Flemish people, had decided to grant their wishes," and that "in execution of the orders of His Majesty the Emperor," he was "authorized to say that in order to give the Flemish people the possibility of developing freely, intellectually, and economically, which has heretofore been refused them," he would lay "the corner-stone of the edifice of the Flemish national autonomy which the Flemish people were not able to conquer for themselves." In accord with the Governor-General in Belgium he gave them the assurance that this policy, "which, as you have said, must be in conformity with the principles of international law," would be adopted, "and in order to bring it about we shall make a complete separation of administration, such as has been desired for so long by both parties in Belgium. . . ."

"The frontier of tongues must also be the frontier of administration under the common authority of the Governor-General," and the collaboration of the German authorities was promised the "representatives of the Flemish people, who are so profoundly conscious of the duty they have to undertake and of the task that has been imposed upon them by their patriotism in these decisive times."

The Chancellor hailed "the unanimity of the Flemish people"

as the best guarantee of the success of their work, and went on to say:

"After the negotiations of peace, and when peace shall have been established, the German Empire will do all in its power to encourage and to ensure the development of the Flemish nation."

And then, in conclusion, he charged his visitors to spread his declaration in their "beautiful country. Say to the citizens of Flanders that we Germans shall do all that we can so that out of the distress and the misery of these times a new era of prosperity shall dawn for them."

It seems incredible, I know, and yet I take these extracts from the speech of the Chancellor as published in the officially censored Press in Germany and in Belgium. That—at the very moment when German soldiers were ravaging Belgium, bearing from those very provinces of Flanders, for which such touching solicitude was expressed, thousands of men into slavery, stripping every home in Belgium of the last of its copper and of its linen, with thousands of spies swarming over the country and rummaging in every bedroom and closet in the land, with daily executions of the death penalty after a mockery of a trial—the head of a modern State could seriously have adopted that tone is beyond the comprehension of the normal mind. If he was sincere it proves that the Prussian mind thinks in sequences that are inaccessible to our mental processes.*

Then on March 21 appeared the official edict of Von Bissing decreeing the division of the administrations, ordering that thenceforth there be virtually two internal Governments, one Flemish with its seat at Brussels, the other Walloon with its seat at Namur. The Flemish administration included, it will be noted, the two Flanders, part of Brabant, and Antwerp—that is, those portions of Belgium most coveted by German imperialism. Never,

*, The feeling of all Belgium was nowhere so correctly expressed as in the protest adopted by the common council of Antwerp, when the stout burghers, themselves all Flemish, declared to the Governor-General: "We consider this measure as pernicious to the existence of our country and as favourable to our enemies. It is in contradiction with all our traditions and with our most important interests. If Antwerp considers itself with pride as the city having the strongest Flemish sentiments in the country, it is nevertheless to be, as a port and as an artistic centre, one of the most powerful organs of Belgium as a whole. It does not yield to any other city in the realm, and this patriotism embraces in the same affection the Flemish and the Walloons. Blind is he who does not see that a people has other interests to safeguard than those which concern simply linguistic questions, however respectable those may be."

even when German troops entered Belgium in that terrible month of August 1914, had such a blow been struck at Belgian honour, at Belgian patriotism, at Belgian pride, and the answer on the part of Belgium, and especially on the part of Flemish Belgium, was instant. The so-called Flemish delegates who had gone to Berlin were disowned, and the most prominent men in the intellectual, political, and financial world among the Flemish at once sent a vigorous protest to the Chancellor. The responsible Flemish leaders, indeed, had protested even before the *affiche* definitely announcing the separation had been published. On the 20th they addressed a protest to the Chancellor of the Empire, telling him that the so-called delegation was composed of men unknown in the country, saying that they were without mandate or authority, and denouncing them as traitors to their own country and their own people. They were, indeed, everywhere execrated; threats against them were heard; if they remained in Belgium after the war they would be lynched, and they were added to the list, not very long in truth, considering all the circumstances, of those of whom it was said, "*On arrangera leur affaire après la guerre.*"

As the far-reaching meaning and the purpose of this act became more and more understood there was a spirit of resistance in Belgium such as I had never seen before. I was not in Belgium to see the end, but in those late days in March the personalities of Belgium and all the Parliamentarians then in or near the capital met secretly and on several occasions, and unanimously resolved to resist the plan to dismember their nation. As a first step it was decided that when the edict was put into execution all the heads of departments should resign.

"When you are 'outside,'" said one of the leaders to me, "tell our friends that we will never submit; that the heads of departments will resign; tell them not to think of us, not to think of peace without victory, but to go on fighting until this brutal and insolent power is crushed." *

* The project was put into execution and the functionaries affected were ready and prompt to act; all the heads of departments, without exception, instantly resigned and refused to serve under the newly imposed conditions.

Baron von Bissing died on April 18, 1917, and Baron von Falkenhausen, appointed to succeed him as Governor-General in Belgium, continued the work of dismemberment. On May 19, 1917, he issued an order to the Herr Dr. von Sandt, Chief of the Civil Administration, to revoke his promise of January 4, 1915, and thus withdrew from the functionaries the right to resign. This was

That message was given to me again and again, by all sorts and conditions of men. It was the unanimous sentiment of those brave people who endured, not only all the cruelties and calamities and horrors of war, but the ignominies of a German occupation besides, a civil population that resisted as heroically as its little army resisted at Liége and on the Yser. It is a sentiment that expresses the very soul of that brave people, about whose tragic destiny the great struggle for justice and freedom in the world has swirled.

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accordingly done, and the functionaries who had refused to continue after the separation of administration were arrested and most of them taken to Germany as prisoners, for having exercised a right that was not only assured them by The Hague Conventions, but had been expressly acknowledged by the German Government when they consented to continue at their posts, and had thereby formed a part of their contract of employment.

"Revoking" a promise was not much more of a novelty in Belgium than ignoring The Hague Conventions. The walls of Brussels had often borne solemn proclamations "revoking" promises made to the population. Then, the promise of immunity having been "revoked," the directors, secretaries-general, chiefs of division, and other functionaries who had resigned were arrested and dragged off to prison camps in Germany.

Cardinal Mercier, that noble and austere figure, the incarnation of the virtues of his race, the prelate who recalls the early fathers of the Church, added to the long list of heroic deeds he had so courageously performed by a letter to Baron von Falkenhausen in which he resolutely defended the right of these functionaries to resign, and protested against their deportation.

The Cardinal's letter concludes with a spirited and trenchant sentence:

"Excellency," he says, "heed those who know the Belgian people and their history; no violence will ever overcome their patriotism."

The Cardinal sums up his countrymen in this defiant phrase. Their resistance to this attack on the political field has been instant and determined, as it was on the field of battle when, in 1914, the Power that had sworn to protect the little State laid it waste with fire and sword. It is one more proof of the indomitable resistance of a brave people, inspiring to every lover of human liberty who realizes the significance of this war as the effort of autocracy, in its modern form of a military caste with a camouflage of culture, to yoke its domination on the world.

Reading the Cardinal's various protests side by side with the Von Bissing testament, one may behold in striking contrast the irreconcilable doctrines that oppose each other in this world-conflict. The two figures themselves are in bold opposition—the one, with no arms but those of culture, contending for democracy and justice, relying on the rule of reason; the other, with a ruthless army at his command, striving to bring about the reign of brutal force, and relying on the theory that any deed is right if one has the power and the effrontery to commit it.

Somewhere toward the close of the Von Bissing memoir there is a sentence in which is cited the advice of Machiavelli to the effect that when a prince would annex a province he must first dispose of the ruler of that province, even, if need be, by putting him to death.

General von Bissing is dead and history will deal with his rule in Belgium, and among the documents for the future historian to study none, perhaps, will be more interesting than this memoir, made public and vouched for by Herr Bacmeister, who thought thereby to render his friend an homage and his nation a patriotic service.

B. W.

XLV: SPRING

AND while all this was going on we watched the spring come once more to Belgium, with pale, melancholy days that would have seemed wholly without hope had it not been for the thought that the great Republic in the West was organizing a newer and larger Commission for Relief in Belgium. Our trunks and boxes were all packed and we were ready to leave on a moment's notice, and yet we lived on, as we had lived so long, and had we but known were destined still to live, *sur la branche.*

"Shall we have war?" said Count von Gersky, when I encountered him one morning in the Montagne de la Cour.

I answered his question with a diplomatic shrug of the shoulders and as careless an "As you please" as I could command. . . . Count von Gersky was what might have been called an *officier de liaison* between the General Staff in the north of France and the C.R.B. in its work in that region, and he had rendered loyal service to the cause. Mr. Hoover and Dr. Kellogg had always spoken of him with respect. He was a big, fine-looking man, who, after his twelve years' residence in London, wore a monocle and had a manner that was distinctly English. He was smiling and pleasant.

We talked a while there in the street; the Count said that if we were to abandon the *ravitaillement,* or not contrive somehow to keep it going, the people in the north of France would have to starve, for the Germans had only enough food for themselves.

And the people of Belgium were in the same plight. Just then down at the Gare du Luxembourg there were daily long lines of women surrendering up to the Germans their copper batteries, those pots and kettles which they had polished through so many years, which had been furbished and polished by their mothers and grandmothers before them, to make shining masses of gold in Flemish kitchens, taken from them now to be made into munitions of war with which to kill the husbands and brothers of those women. In the Bois, where the bright new greens were gleaming, there were no smart equipages, no bright toilettes any more, no ladies and gentlemen riding spirited horses, and no lovers courting there; only ragged men in broken sabots, and

children, their fingers blue with cold, picking up twigs to make a little fire at home.

One morning coming back from the Bois along the Avenue Louise, there near the Place Stéphanie, I met de Sinçay, who remarked, almost casually :

"The Tsar has abdicated ; the Grand Duke Nicholas Alexandrovitch is Regent ; there will be a Constitutional Government."

We stood there and discussed the historical event, the latest of all the prodigious sequels to the French Revolution, in that almost indifferent calm that historical events had bred in us. . . . How the world had changed ! Revolutions, the fall of dynasties, the crash of empires, these were but stuff for small talk. An event had to be either very immense or very small to interest us. One heard a big story, as the journalists say, every hour or two, and yet, strange and inscrutable irony in things, the very moment in which there was so much news was the one in which censors appeared and a shortage of that paper on which the journalists would have loved to print it all !

I walked on, thinking of revolutions ; would they come everywhere after the war, as so many were saying ? "*Gare à la démocratie après la guerre !*" exclaimed, one evening after dinner, a man who did not much believe in democracy, shaking a warning finger at the company. Every one, since the war began, had been predicting a revolution in Germany, but it had not come, nor would it, said I to myself—unless the Government ordered it. . . . There they went, those men in field-grey, with the sheer occiputs and narrow craniums, *têtes carrées*, their ears thrust out like those of fauns under their little round skull-caps, trudging along the boulevard with stupid, docile, bovine expressions. There was no spirit, no revolt in them ; theirs was the only country that had not, at some time in its history, had a revolution—not that revolutions in and of themselves were always good things, but they did at least show spirit and independence. All good countries had had them, as all good dogs have had the distemper ; they had only a little *échauffourée* in 1848, immediately put down. They were tame, doubly mastered, and enslaved, yet capable of monstrous brutalities and sanguinary cruelties on the weak—unarmed civilians, women, and children.

I think we talked more of the retreat of the German army in the north of France than of any other contemporary event,

though no one was quite sure it was a retreat. Brussels insisted that it was, because Brussels liked to think of it as a retreat, but the only results noted were the hordes of refugees from evacuated villages in the north of France who came pouring into the Hainaut. They had fled on two hours' notice in fear and terror, leaving their homes, which were in flames before they could pause for a last look at them. They were streaming into Charleroi with bleeding feet, grandfathers and grandmothers bearing frightened children with wild, haunted, haggard eyes. Mr. Gregory told me that there were fifty thousand of them, another vast Hegira of that civilian population that was scattered in tribal wanderings by the besom of destruction. The Belgian villagers received them with Belgian hospitality; villages of only five hundred inhabitants found means of lodging a thousand, and the C.R.B. fed them. And the vast armies swayed back and forth in that unending struggle.

And yet life went on, in some of its aspects quite normal; M. Francqui was married during that month, as was his lieutenant, M. Emmanuel Janssen, and we all went to the ceremony in the Église de St.-Croix, near the Étangs d'Ixelles, one bright spring morning. But the wedding over, the sun, as though it had appeared for that event alone, went under the grey clouds and it was almost winter again, with the cold, the *giboulées de mars*, though when the 21st, the first day of spring, came, and the ground was all covered with snow, a charming thing befell. In *Le Quotidien*, one of the censored sheets, there appeared a little article that filled Brussels with amazement and delight, and in the immense monotony of stupendous events gave us a theme for conversation far more lively and interesting than battles and revolutions. It was this:

LUI . . .[1]

Le printemps n'est pas encore là, en dépit de la date fatidique du 21 mars. Une ou deux fois déjà nos espoirs ont été trompés. Qu'importe? . . . L'astronomie est une science exacte, et il est des certitudes mathématiques.

Son retour a Lui aussi est écrit au cadran éternel des temps, et

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HIM . . .

[1] Spring is not yet here, despite the fatidical date of March 21. Once or twice already our hopes have been disappointed. What matter? . . . Astronomy is an exact science, and it is mathematically certain.

His return also is written on the eternal dial of time, and when he makes his

lorsqu'il fera son entrée triomphale dans sa bonne ville de Bruxelles, de l'avoir attendu si longtemps, si impatiemment, notre joie sera plus grande encore. Ce sera la fête du soleil, la fête des fleurs, et l'âme de tout un peuple communiera avec Lui. . . .

What unknown writer in that meretricious inspired Press had still the patriotism in his soul to write a little poem so cleverly that the German censor never saw the allusion that made all Brussels for the moment happy by its pretty conceit, and buoyed up the hope and reaffirmed that faith, of which there was imperative need if man was to continue to believe in justice in the universe, in the inevitable coming of that day when the King would return? Whoever he was, he had his secret satisfaction, atoning somewhat for the treason his necessities tempted him to commit in writing for that Press at all, and the literal, unimaginative German censor never suspected until the spies, listening at every keyhole in town, got some inkling of the fact that it was an *articulé à double entente*, and when it was at last explained to the censor the newspaper was suspended for its audacity.

But the spring was as tardy as the victory, the smiles faded, and the people in the dismal streets wore again the old moody, preoccupied expression of sadness.

"*Vodden en beenen!*" called the old woman in her shrill pipe down the Rue de Trèves every morning under my window. Ah, yes! Rags and old bones! To this had German materialism brought down a world that once was lovely in the springtime and full of new hope each morning.

XLVI. WAR AT LAST

Such was the ambient element of our life during those strange days of waiting and of worry, while that fatal ankylosis perpetuated the uncertainty in the reorganization of the *ravitaillement*. It had been plain, I think, to most of us, that with Germany and America at war the Americans, even if they desired, could not remain long in Belgium, travelling about at their will and pleasure, inspecting the distribution of food and reporting

triumphal entry into his good city of Brussels, after having waited so long, so impatiently, our joy will be all the greater. That will be the feast of the sun, the feast of the flowers, and the soul of a whole people will commune with Him. . . .

of German interferences and abuses. But there were some who clung to the illusion that it might be, and clung to it almost to the last, and no argument seemed powerful enough to shake their fatal infatuation.

It is not a safe rule to go by, and I should hesitate to recommend it to any one, but there are moments of complication in life when it seems that there is but one thing to do, and that is to sit down and wait, in the hope, too often illusory and vain, that opposing tendencies by their mutual reaction will neutralize their own contradictions. The wires that lay under three thousand miles of troubled seas seemed for a while to be as hopelessly crossed and entangled as the purposes they were endeavouring to harmonize. I shall not set myself the tiresome and tedious task of describing how our problem was complicated by their conflicting expressions, oftentimes ludicrous enough to laugh at had we not been so worn by the nervous strain that we felt like weeping over them.

And so all the while, as in almost endless and futile conferences the matter was discussed, over and over, in a hopeless, vicious circle, and the two nations were drifting into the inevitable clash of war, Mr. Gregory and I could only continue to urge that provision be made for replacing the Americans.

Our meetings, once so interesting, had become dull; the break in diplomatic relations, the coming separation, the impending change, the uncertainty as to the future, the ever-present thought that we were gathered perhaps for the last time, dispirited and discouraged us all, and the weariness of the long strain was apparent in every one. M. Francqui seemed to have no more those jokes, those flashes of wit, that had once enlivened us and kept up our spirits. We discussed the reports of abuses, heard that cattle were still being shipped in hundreds, had private information that the authorities were powerless to prevent it—but these things, once so momentous in the trouble they occasioned, seemed now to be small in comparison with the larger problems. There were utter weariness, long pauses, and silences.

"Well, my dear Minister," said Baron Lambert, rising one day after we had been in discussion for an hour, "I have a feeling that some one should be the first to go, and I'll be that one."

Mr. Gregory produced some effect by his announcement, early

in March, that in the event of war he felt that all the Americans should leave at once.

"I know that I shall," he said. "In war a civilian's place is in his own country, or at least not in the enemy's country—if he can avoid it."

But would he be able to avoid it, and would all those other Americans be able to avoid it, if we did nothing?

I urged again and again that the Dutch and Spanish delegates be brought in and distributed over Belgium. Villalobar had approved, as had Van Vollenhoven, but Holland was nearer Belgium than was Spain, and Dutchmen more accessible than Spaniards, and the Marquis could not so easily or so promptly produce his own countrymen. It is not, I trust, too chauvinistic to say that it was not easy to find men of the character of those who had served as volunteers in the Commission for Relief in Belgium. As the Marquis himself once remarked, they were gentlemen and business men. Gentlemen could be found elsewhere, and business men as well, "but," said the Marquis, "the gentlemen are not always business men and the business men are not always gentlemen!"

Then we had what was always to me good news—Kellogg was coming and we decided to postpone our discussion until he arrived. I had not as yet sent any answer to Von der Lancken's letter; I had been hoping that we could reach some solution that would enable me to write definitely, but I could leave it no longer unanswered, and I sent my temporizing reply.*

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BRUXELLES, *le 26 février* 1917.

MON CHER BARON,—J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre aimable lettre d'aujourd'hui, dans laquelle vous réitérez le désir, que vous aviez déjà exprimé dans votre letrre du 10 février à Son Excellence Monsieur le Marquis de Villalobar, de voir continuer le travail de la Commission for Relief in Belgium, et mon association à cette œuvre. Ainsi que je l'ai écrit à Son Excellence Monsieur le Marquis de Villalobar en lui accusant réception d'une copie de votre lettre, les Messieurs américains de la Commission for Relief in Belgium seraient toujours prêts à continuer leur travail en Belgique, comme je serais heureux moi-même de rester associé à cette œuvre d'une manière compatible avec la position que j'ai l'honneur d'occuper dans le service diplomatique du Gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique.

Vous voulez bien me rappeller aussi la conversation que j'ai eu le plaisir d'avoir avec vous à ce sujet, et au cours de laquelle je vous ai dit que si nous trouvions le moyen de concilier les exigences d'une situation sans précédent je prolongerais volontiers mon séjour en Belgique pour veiller à la continuation du bon fonctionnement de la Commission for Relief in Belgium.

Je vous remercie encore pour l'honneur que vous me faites en me priant,

And then, like a thunderbolt, came the exposure in America of Zimmermann's plot in Mexico, with its generous offer to Mexico of the States of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico if she would go to war with America. Nothing in the whole course of the war had more accurately revealed the German mentality, and at the Politische Abteilung there was real chagrin, if not at the miserable trick at least at the disclosure of it, and Villalobar, chaffing them there about it, said:

"*Quand on veut faire ces choses-là, il faut savoir les faire.*"

The news reached us just as we were waiting for the President's second inaugural, and we were beginning to hear rumours of an

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dans les circonstances actuelles, de rester à Bruxelles, et je différerai mon départ jusqu'à ce que soient reglées les questions encore en litige au sujet du ravitaillement; car je suis certain que nous avons tous le même désir de n'épargner aucune peine en vue de l'accomplissement de cette œuvre humanitaire à laquelle vos efforts et votre bienveillance ont toujours été si précieux.

Veuillez recevoir, mon cher Baron, l'assurance de mes sentiments sincèrement dévoués.

BRAND WHITLOCK.

À Son Excellence Monsieur le Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz,
Etc. etc., Bruxelles.

Translation

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BRUSSELS, *February* 26, 1917.

MY DEAR BARON,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter of even date, in which you reiterate the desire, which you had already expressed in your letter of February 10 to His Excellency the Marquis of Villalobar, to see the work of the Commission for Relief in Belgium continued and my association with it. As I have written to His Excellency the Marquis of Villalobar in acknowledging receipt of a copy of your letter, the American gentlemen of the Commission for Relief in Belgium are always ready to continue their work in Belgium, as I myself should be happy to remain associated with that work under conditions compatible with the position which I have the honour to occupy in the diplomatic service of the Government of the United States of America.

You are good enough also to remind me of the conversation which I had the pleasure of having with you, and during the course of which I told you that if we found means of reconciling the demands of an unprecedented situation, I should gladly prolong my stay in Belgium in order to look after the continuation of the proper functioning of the Commission for Relief in Belgium.

I thank you again for the honour you do me in urging me, under the present circumstances, to remain in Brussels, and I shall postpone my departure until the questions still in dispute concerning the *ravitaillement* are settled; because I am certain that we all have the same desire to spare no pains in bringing about the accomplishment of this humanitarian work, to which your efforts and your kindness have always been so precious.

Pray accept, my dear Baron, the assurance of my sentiments of sincere respect.

BRAND WHITLOCK.

To His Excellency the Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz,
Etc. etc., Brussels.

extraordinary session of Congress, and we could imagine how the revelation would act on national sentiment at such a time. The German newspapers were sputtering with splenetic rage over the exposure of the plot, and complaining of the President, saying that it was unfair of him to expose Zimmermann; and we suffered the reaction of all this feeling.

And I was more than ever anxious to get the C.R.B. men out of Belgium, for when Kellogg came, having crossed from Harwich to the Hook of Holland in a dispatch-boat, convoyed by destroyers, he brought news that because of the *lourde gaffe* war was inevitable and would come within a fortnight. My long residence in Belgium under German rule had taught me what they might expect when that two weeks had expired; I had constant visions of their being deported to Ruhleben, or some such place.

In the many conferences that followed I urged again and again the one possible solution which under the circumstances would ensure the continuance of the *ravitaillement*—the replacement of the American delegates by Dutchmen and Spaniards, and at last the plan, endorsed by Mr. Hoover, was assented to by all. The agreement came when we were almost in despair. The Germans had not yet given the promised guarantees for the immunity of the men of the C.R.B., and were threatening to hold them in quarantine at Spa, or at Baden-Baden, or somewhere in Germany, and Kellogg hurried out through the closed frontier with our plan, and Mr. Gregory arranged to substitute the new delegates as soon as they came in. Even then there were more difficulties and delays; the proportion of Spaniards to Dutch was of long discussion, and Kellogg stopped in Holland until this problem could be solved.

I had little notion of what interest the world outside was taking in us until one day Dr. Reith sent to me to ask that in view of the alarming rumours that were being published, I give a statement to be telegraphed to American newspapers testifying that the Germans had done nothing inimical to the interests of the C.R.B. men and their work. I replied that it would be time enough to give such a statement when we had the promised assurances, and we got them then in writing, but they provided that before they could be released the men of the C.R.B. should be held in quarantine for a month! Inasmuch as the situation in its then unsettled state seemed likely to endure that long,

Mr. Gregory and I asked the Germans to let the men pass this period of purification in Brussels, where they were then assembled waiting anxiously from day to day some news as to their fate; we pointed out that in all civilized countries some allowance was made, even in the case of criminals, for the period they had passed in gaol awaiting trial, and Lancken agreed that this be done, in the case of the delegates in Belgium, at least; and a few days later we induced them to reduce by a fortnight the duration of the quarantine.

Then I found that I had another problem on my hands, a problem growing out of the situation of the Chinese, depicted for me by Tchao Itao, the Chinese Chargé, and Shu-Tze, the Secretary of the Legation, who came one day for advice. When their Minister, Mr. Ouang, had gone away in the summer he had left behind a little son, a boy of six; they had asked for passports for the boy and his tutor, to join Mr. Ouang in Switzerland; the passports had been given, and then suddenly withdrawn, and a passport was issued only for the boy—a lad of six in a strange world, expected to start out on such a journey alone! And, moreover, a rupture in their diplomatic relations with Germany was imminent.

But the Spaniards and the Dutchmen arrived at last, and on March 22 Mr. Gregory began to install them in place of the Americans. He made the first changes in the north of France, where there were seven of our men, and these were to be sent at once by the Germans to Baden-Baden to be quarantined for a fortnight; we had induced the Germans to shorten the period of cleansing in their case as well to that length of time. In order to instruct the new men Mr. Prentiss Gray had volunteered to remain after Mr. Gregory's departure, if Mr. Gregory ever got away, which sometimes we doubted. The news that crept in between the shining wires at the frontier was to the effect that all America was in vast excitement. The delegates were waiting in Brussels, confined to the limits of the city on parole, and there is little doubt that all the time when the delivery of the promised guarantees of immunity were from day to day delayed, the Germans intended to hold them as hostages; I had it from an excellent source, and the Germans explained their delay by alleging a fear that the Americans might mistreat Germans in America. It was with such possibilities suspended over them that they waited—and I waited.

It came at last on Sunday, March 25, a telegram from the President himself. At tea-time Villalobar was announced; his face was very grave. Mr. Gregory happened to be with me. The Marquis had a telegram from his colleague at The Hague. It was this:

> Le représentant des États-Unis demande que Votre Excellence transmettre au Ministre d'Amérique dans cette capitale le câble suivant, daté de Washington 23 mars et venant du Secrétaire d'État:
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> "A la demande du Président, je vous transmets l'instruction de quitter la Belgique immédiatement, accompagné par le personnel de votre Légation, par les officiers consulaires américains et par les membres de la Commission for Relief in Belgium. Le Département vous prie de télégraphier la date probable de votre départ de Belgique, ainsi que la route que vous suivrez, et vos projets." *

It was a distinct relief, and Mr. Gregory sprang up at once to send the Dutch and Spanish delegates that night into the provinces.

XLVII. "JAMAIS PLUS"

THE next morning I went to see Lancken. When I told him the news, there in that little room upstairs where the tiny stove was always going furiously, he looked grave for a moment, then said that there was nothing to be done but to bow to the inevitable. He expressed regret at my departure, and asked me to grant him a day or two in which to make arrangements for the passports; there would be a sleeping-car for the Legation staff, the best he could contrive because of the difficulty in transportation just then on account of the movement of troops. As to the Consuls and the C.R.B., he would know more the following day, but he feared that it would be impossible to give us a special train so that we could all go out together. We chatted some time under the sobering influence of the thought of war between our countries.

Translation

The United States representative begs that Your Excellency transmit to the American Minister at that capital the following cablegram, dated Washington, March 23, and coming from the Secretary of State:

"At the request of the President I transmit instructions to you to leave Belgium immediately, accompanied by the personnel of your Legation, by the American consular officers, and by the members of the Commission for Relief in Belgium. The Department begs you to telegraph the probable date of your departure as well as the route which you will follow, and your plans."

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed, "*amis depuis le temps de Frédéric II!*"

He feared that the English would seize the occasion to stop the *ravitaillement*, but I told him that only the Germans could do that; that if they continued to permit the abuses it would stop, but that it would all go on well if they put an end to them. He promised that the Governor-General would take drastic measures. He thought that we were nearing the end of the war because of the Russian Revolution; there would soon be a separate peace with Petrograd, he said, and perhaps with another nation, though he did not vouchsafe its name.

The news flew at once over the town, in that mysterious way it always had in Brussels; again our friends came to bid us farewell, and when I went for a last look at the corners of the old town I had grown to love so deeply, in every one of the familiar shops where I stopped the people were already sorrowfully aware that at last we were going. And in the afternoon of that long day, as I was having my tea alone, I received a letter from the Comité National, signed by M. Solvay and M. Francqui, a letter that I read not without emotion.*

COMITÉ NATIONAL DE SECOURS ET D'ALIMENTATION,
MONTAGNE DU PARC, 3,
BRUXELLES, *le* 26 *mars* 1917.

CHER MINISTRE,—Parmi toutes les heures graves qu'a vécues le Comité National celle que marque votre départ est l'une des plus émouvantes.

Depuis près de deux ans et demi, les Belges qui, avec le concours de la Commission for Relief in Belgium, ont assumé la lourde tâche de faire vivre quand même, leurs compatriotes, se sentaient soutenus dans leur effort par votre sympathie et par votre aide constante. Votre présence parmi eux, la certitude qu'ils avaient de pouvoir, en toute circonstance, faire appel à votre intervention à votre appui, à votre amitié ardente, étaient pour eux une force précieuse. Ils en étaient arrivés à compter sur vous comme sur un compatriote. Il semblait presqu'en votre esprit généreux deux patriotismes vécussent: l'un pour votre grande nation, l'autre pour le petit pays que sa détresse et sa passion du droit qui conduit votre carrière, vous avaient fait aimer.

Et nous n'étions pas seuls, nous qui pouvions mesurer l'étendue du service par vous rendu en demeurant en Belgique, nous n'étions pas seuls à éprouver cette impression. Vous avez, cher Ministre, pu vous rendre compte de la profondeur des sentiments de respect et de reconnaissance dont vous entourait toute la population belge. Au moment où l'on a appris en Belgique la rupture des relations diplomatiques entre les États-Unis et l'Allemagne, ce qui a le plus frappé ce qui a profondément ému, c'est la pensée de votre départ.

Aujourd'hui cette pensée nous secoue tous. Nous ne voulons pas tenter de vous dire ici toute notre reconnaissance et toute celle du peuple belge; il faudrait pour l'exprimer, des formes solennelles, possibles seulement lorsque la nation vivra de sa vie normale. Alors seulement la Belgique pourra montrer qu'elle sait ce qu'elle doit à la grande république.

Aujourd'hui nous venons dire à l'homme qui l'a si noblement représentée

Among my callers that afternoon was a German officer of reserves, a man for whom I had come to have a respect. He was highly educated and there was much good in him, such limitations as he had being essentially Teutonic. I had talked often with him; he used to explain to me the well-known German conception of war as a biological struggle of the human species, destined to go on for ever—that misunderstanding of Darwinism with which they had dosed their muddled philosophy. Now that this struggle for life was on between his species and mine, he was deeply shocked and grieved, and yet not at all unfriendly. Sitting there holding his great helmet between his knees, his face grown dark and sad, he spoke very earnestly of the impending conflict. He had not expected war, he said, as though he had cause for grievance, and he assured me that all Germans felt very bitterly toward America; America had been Germany's worst enemy; for since the Allies were not ready Germany would have won the war if America had not furnished munitions, and enriched herself in so doing. He said that we had not been neutral, that we had not insisted on protecting our commerce with Germany—that is, had not insisted on England's allowing American ships to pass the blockade. I tried to explain to him the theory of a blockade, but there was no explanation that I could make understandable to him. He began then to talk about the submarines, carefully explained to me that the German Government could not accede to America's demand, could not observe the rules as to giving warning to a ship, because if a submarine showed itself, it could be instantly sunk.

"You see," he said, with an air of happy illumination, "the submarine is a new invention; it changes the conditions of warfare; the old rules cannot be applied to it; America should have seen this and governed herself accordingly."

"But," I said, "do you think that you can change the rules

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parmi nous, à l'homme de grand cœur et d'esprit élevé, le respect qu'il nous inspire, la gratitude que nous lui gardons, la tristesse que nous cause son départ et notre espoir ardent de le revoir en des jours meilleurs qu'il aura puissamment contribué à nous rendre.

Nous vous prions, cher Ministre et ami, de transmettre à Madame Brand Whitlock l'expression de notre respect, de lui dire que nous garderons le souvenir de son intelligente bonté, de remercier pour nous les membres du personnel de votre légation qui ont secondé vos efforts avec tant de zèle, de passion, d'affectueux élan, et de croire à nos sentiments d'inaltérable dévouement.

E. FRANCQUI,
E. SOLVAY.

of the game to your own advantage while the game is going on, just because you are losing ? "

He stared at me. He did not see the point. They have, as I have said more than once, no sports in Germany. A disarmed foe, a handicapped adversary—so much the better.

It was plain from the manner of all the Germans that I met at this time that none of them had expected America to take up the challenge, and that the German Government had not expected it, for they, of course, were but reflecting the opinion of Berlin. " *Une protestation très forte, mais oui,*" as Lancken had said, but no more. Their state of mind revealed the profound depths of cynicism to which their philosophy of life had sunk them. They did not understand America, of course ; not many Europeans have ever understood her. Many have noted her superficial defects, as did Dickens and Mrs. Trollope and most of those who wrote books about us after a brief visit to our shores ; the only ones who apprehended the secret were Lord Bryce and, long before, the young de Tocqueville. But to the others she lay off there in the West dim and mysterious ; and in reply to snobbish criticisms there was only the scornful laugh of the Genius of these States echoing in sovereign indifference from his mountain-top afar in the West.

There had been several conceptions of us, current in novel or cinema, the millionaire of the liberal *pourboire,* or the cowboy in evening dress nonchalantly chewing a cigar, and now and then, when in a tight pinch, calmly drawing his six-shooter. A charming lady at Brussels one evening remarked to me at dinner that it must be most uncomfortable to live in those sky-scrapers and to be known by a number.

But the most unflattering conception was that of the Germans, who thought us as grossly materialistic as themselves, and great hypocrites in the bargain, pretending to a morality in which we did not believe. Of the essential idealism of America they had literally no notion. Their view of human society in general was indeed no more generous than that of Talleyrand, who carried disillusion to the point of an extravagant and utter negation, though they lacked the wit, so abundant in Talleyrand, that makes cynicism and pessimism agreeable. They were so imbued with the cynicism that had prevailed in European Chancelleries for decades that they considered President Wilson's exposition

of principles and ideals merely as some new and rather clever political camouflage. It never occurred to them to take it seriously; it never occurred to them that any public man anywhere took such things seriously; and, failing to see in the notes and speeches in which that exposition had been made, the careful, patient, orderly pleadings on which the great Liberal leader was preparing to try the cause of humanity before the bar of history, unable to see the point where the issues at last were joined, they supposed that he would go on with the ideal exposition and leave them to continue the realistic work of the submarines.

The days that followed were filled with good-byes. I went one afternoon for tea with a charming old lady in her house in the Rue Royale, at the corner of the Rue Belliard, a fine old mansion, pure Louis XIV; once the palace of a bishop. From the window of the *salon* I looked down on that spot where once stood the Pensionnat Heger, with its memories of Charlotte Brontë. In her day it was reached by the stairs that descend there behind the statue of Count Belliard, but it is all gone now, to make place for the great central railway station that was a part of the vast design Léopold II had for improving Brussels. And gazing down there, thinking of Charlotte Brontë and of her affection for the master of the school, I had that sadness which one feels in leaving a place where one has lived, and the regret of not having hunted out all the old literary landmarks of Brussels; on that very spot before my eyes the impressionable Irish girl had lived and suffered; beneath the slender, delicate spire of the Hôtel de Ville, hung like a scarf of lovely lace in the pale spring sky there on the Grand' Place, was the house where Victor Hugo had lived while he was making his studies for the description of the Battle of Waterloo; just across the Park was the house where Byron once stayed; not far away was the building where there had been "the sound of revelry by night," whence George Osborne had gone forth to the battle on the field where he was found the next morning, as Thackeray has put it in one of those rare dramatic climaxes in fiction that make one gasp, "lying on his face, dead." Baudelaire, rolling his splenetic eye on the crowds of that humanity which he hated in his sick heart, had roamed those very streets and lived under some of those huddled roofs; and John Lathrop Motley, dwelling in Brussels long ago, had delved here

for his great history of William the Silent. I had intended to hunt all this out and to write it down, and now it was too late; the task could only be added to that great mass of unfulfilled intentions now never to be realized, the mass that grows so great and intensifies its reproach as we grow old. *"Jamais plus! Jamais plus!"*

I went the next morning to talk with Von Moltke about the train; there was hemming and hawing; it would be impossible to get a special train, all of us could not go at once.

"Very well," I said, "if there are several trains, I shall go out last."

"Why?"

"Why? Because when the ship goes down the captain goes over the side last."

Thus to the old uncertainties so long endured, as to when and how we should go, there came a new uncertainty as to whether we should go at all. I had asked for a special train in which to take the Legation staff, the Consuls and their families, the C.R.B., and the Chinese Legation, for the Chinese Government had broken off diplomatic relations with Germany, and Sven Poussette, then charged with the representation of Chinese interests, had officially renewed the request of our Chinese colleagues that I take them with my party. But as Von Moltke had intimated, it was proposed that the Legation go one day, the Consuls a few days later, and last of all the men of the C.R.B. It was told me that Lancken had been seen very dark of visage, very much worried, and that he had said that Berlin had ordered that we be sent out by Denmark, there to take ship for America, a petty reluctance to recognize the Belgian Government in exile at Havre, or its existence! He had telephoned to Berlin, however, and had that order revoked.

Meanwhile, in the midst of all these uncertainties and the anxieties they created, the Legation continued to be thronged with callers who came to bid us farewell, the expression of that Belgian gratitude which was so real, so overwhelming, and so constantly expressed that I was often embarrassed by it. All the officials, all the notables of the city, all our friends, came, and it was beautiful and touching, but no expression was more so than the call of Cardinal Mercier.

He came Thursday afternoon at tea-time, tall, majestic, with

the simplicity of the truly great—such blue eyes of virtue and lofty courage! He was accompanied by the Reverend Père Rutten, who wore the white robe of a Dominican Father, back in Belgium again after many adventures. I had crossed the sea with him on my return from America in 1915. His Eminence expressed sorrow, and showed sorrow, at our going. He spoke with beautiful appreciation of America and what America had done for Belgium, and said that Belgium had lost her "stay and support"—"*l'Amérique—la force, l'autorité d'une grande nation.*" His voice was vibrant with emotion; he was still a moment, and bowed his grey head. . . .

I told him that after the war he would have to make a voyage to America, where he was so much loved and admired, and when I related how Protestant clergymen and Jewish Rabbis had united with the priests of his own faith to praise his courage and to extol his patriotism, he looked at me in the astonishment that was the product of his modesty. He feared that he was too old to undertake the voyage, there was the question of sea-sickness, but I assured him that in summer the ocean for him would be as smooth as *les étangs d'Ixelles*.

Over and over again he thanked me for what, as he was generous enough to say, I had done for Belgium. I wish that I might give all the conversation, and I wish more than all that I might give some sense of the charm and puissance of his personality. The effect of his visit was most uplifting. He is one of those great beings that in a world crowded with little men lift themselves far above the mass and by the sheer force of moral grandeur radiate sweetness and light. In his presence all cares, all petty feelings, and all haunting fears fade away; one is before eternal verities, and we felt that night as though we had had a prophet in the house. Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked with us by the way?

On Friday morning—we counted those last days as a prisoner might—Gregory arrived early to say that Reith had told him that the C.R.B. could not go out until April 6, a week hence. I sent Ruddock at once to tell Von Moltke that if the C.R.B. did not go on Monday I should not go; that they might do as they pleased, send me as prisoner to Germany, or shoot me in the Grand' Place. I *would* not go before the C.R.B. . . .

Lancken sent to know if I could receive him at eleven o'clock;

then he postponed the visit until afternoon, and something, some prescience, I know not what, told me that he was elusively leaving on one of those trips to Berlin. At five o'clock that afternoon then, scrupulously groomed as ever, and smart in the light bluish-grey uniform that so well set off his handsome figure, wearing side arms, he came to make his adieux; and my presentiment was correct—he was going to Berlin that night—to be gone a week. We had tea, and when he and my wife and I had chatted for a while he began to discuss the plans for our departure, beginning with the statement that Sherman, our Vice-Consul at Antwerp, might be detained as having been too pro-English, but I was able to persuade him out of that notion and to induce him to forgo that measure. Then he said that my train would be ready for Monday, but—there it was, the familiar "but" for which I was waiting—the C.R.B. could not go until the 6th, because Gregory had fixed that day.

"Very well," I said, "then I shall not go until the 6th."

He looked up in surprise; that would make trouble, he said; he could not be responsible for the military—they might do anything.

"Very well, let them do anything," I replied; "I will not go first, but last."

He said that it would be very difficult to change the arrangements and to send the C.R.B. Monday; the military might insist on their going into quarantine; there were difficulties of all sorts.

"That is a grave decision," he said solemnly. "Would you accept all the consequences of it?"

"I do not know what you mean by 'the consequences,'" I replied, "but let them be as grave as they will, I accept them. I will not be the first, but the last to leave."

He gazed intently at me for a moment and then said that he would do all in his power to adjust the difficulty. There was little more to say; he glanced at the watch on his wrist, again expressed regret at seeing me go, and said that as the war was probably nearly over he felt we should meet again soon.

"*Peut-être au congrès de la paix*," he added, shook hands, said *au revoir*, and was gone.

Gregory was waiting to see me, and I told him the unfavourable news, the complication of the last moment which all the while.

deep in our hearts, we had expected. He remembered then that some days before it had been suggested by some one at the Vermittlungstellen that the members of the C.R.B. leave on the 6th, but it had been a suggestion merely, not an order. In the midst of this uncertainty a cablegram came from Washington, an urgent cablegram instructing me to leave at once.

The next morning early there was a call on the telephone; Von Moltke wished to speak to me, to tell me that the train would be ready for Monday at five o'clock. For whom? I asked. And he answered, for the C.R.B., the Consuls, even for the Chinese, who would go out with us. The seven men of the C.R.B. who had served in the north of France had left the evening before, and our going seemed now certain enough to warrant us leaving the "p.p.c." cards that had been so long prepared.

The day had its note of tragedy, for the night had brought the shocking news from Liége that poor Albert Heingartner, our Consul there, had died suddenly of heart failure, falling thus at his post at the very moment in which his services ended. His death cast its shadow over the Legation. He had been long in the Consular Service; he came from my own State of Ohio. I could only send Cruger to close the Consulate and to render what aid he could to the stricken family in such an hour. . . .

The day was crowded then with farewells. There was a *grand déjeuner* at the Taverne Royale, given by the Comité National to the departing Americans of the C.R.B. M. Francqui made a touching speech, and I responded, and with much genuine regret and sorrow we bade adieu to the dear friends with whom we had laboured so long. The remaining hours until evening were taken up with receiving at the Legation those who came to bid us adieu, Burgomaster Lemonnier and the échevins, to present an address from the city of Brussels,* and the Governor and the directors of the Banque Nationale. On Sunday it was

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VILLE DE BRUXELLES, CABINET DU BOURGMESTRE,

BRUXELLES, *le* 30 *mars* 1917.

EXCELLENCE,—À l'heure où vous allez vous éloigner momentanément de la capitale de la Belgique, permettez à l'administration communale de la ville de Bruxelles de vous présenter, une fois de plus, l'expression de sa profonde sympathie.

Nul n'ignore l'aide admirable que les États-Unis d'Amérique n'ont cessé d'apporter à la population belge depuis deux ans et demi. Nous sommes convaincus que, dans un avenir peu éloigné, l'héroïsme de votre grande nation apportera à la Belgique et à ses alliés un concours encore plus puissant et plus

the same, people came all day long, among them Burgomaster Franck, on behalf of the city of Antwerp. And late in the afternoon, when they all were gone, I went with my wife for a last walk along the boulevards in the soft spring rain, in the strange sense of realizing oneself as still of a familiar and beloved scene, yet saying sadly all the while within, " To-morrow I shall behold all this no more."

XLVIII. THE PARTING

It was Monday, the second day of April, and, unless some new complication should arise, some new hitch develop in the scheme of things, our last in Brussels. The trunks and the boxes that had been so long packed were waiting in the corridors; there were the confusion of last hurried preparations, streams of callers,

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généreux. L'affection et la gratitude de nos compatriotes survivront aux événements actuels et feront désormais partie de l'âme même de notre patrie.

À cet hommage qu'il nous sera toujours agréable d'adresser à la grande République d'outremer, nous ne pourrons nous empêcher d'associer le nom du diplomate éminent, de l'homme d'un si grand cœur qui, au cours d'une période remplie de difficultés sans exemple, a été parmi nous le digne interprète de la politique et des sentiments de son pays.

La population bruxelloise ne saurait oublier combien, dans une foule d'occasions, votre intervention a été bienveillante et efficace. La respectueuse affection qu'elle a pour Votre Excellence n'est pas faite uniquement de gratitude.

Il s'y joint un sentiment d'un caractère plus intime : nos concitoyens ont conscience de ce que vous éprouvez pour eux une sympathie sincère et réfléchie.

Ils savent que vous rendez justice à ce qu'il y a de noble et de touchant dans leur courage muet, dans leur endurance inlassable, dans leur patriotisme.

Toutes les fois qu'il est question de votre bonté et de votre dévouement, il est impossible de séparer de votre nom celui de Madame Brand Whitlock. La population bruxelloise ne perdra jamais le souvenir de ce qu'elle lui doit. Nous savons que le cœur de Madame Brand Whitlock a battu bien souvent au récit ou à la vue de nos misères et de nos douleurs présentes.

Vous nous quittez, Excellence ; nous avons le ferme espoir que votre absence ne sera pas de longue durée.

Lorsque vous reviendrez, vous retrouverez une Belgique affranchie, ayant repris sa vie normale, à l'abri de ses libres institutions.

Souvent alors, votre mémoire vous reportera à la période sombre et affligeante, durant laquelle la présence à Bruxelles du Ministre des États-Unis a été, pour notre population et pour nos Administrations communales, une consolation et un réconfort.

Nous vous prions de recevoir, Excellence, ainsi que Madame Brand Whitlock, l'expression de notre haute considération.

Le Collège des Bourgmestre et Échevins de la ville de Bruxelles,

Le Secrétaire,
M. VAUTHIER.

MAURICE LEMONNIER,
STEENS,
E. JACQMAIN,
MAX HALLET,
LÉON PLADET.

masses of flowers, and the weariness of the reaction after the long strain we could not yet realize as over. We of the Legation staff were twenty in all; there were fifteen persons belonging to the Consulates, about forty men of the C.R.B., and about eighteen of the Chinese Legation. We were to have luncheon that day at the residence of Burgomaster Lemonnier in the Avenue Louise; Villalobar was to be there, and Van Vollenhoven, and the échevins of Brussels with their wives. The luncheon was to be at one o'clock; we were to leave at 5.10 in the afternoon.

At ten o'clock in the morning I was passing through the lower hall of the Legation; suddenly a German soldier stood before me at the salute; he was, from his costume, an *estafette*, and he showed the signs of having had a long ride on the motor-cycle that stood outside the door. He gave me a great envelope; I opened it and read an invitation from the Governor-General to luncheon at Trois-Fontaines, at one o'clock. I had not seen Baron von Bissing since his return from Wiesbaden; he had been ill ever since returning from his cure, and when I had asked Von Moltke the day before when I might go to bid him farewell, he had not been sure that the Governor-General's health would permit him to receive me at all. And now, this invitation—for one o'clock, the very hour for which I had accepted at the Burgomaster's. The eternal complication, then, down to the very end!

The *estafette* was to await the response, and he stood there immobile, at attention I thought an instant, then suddenly the solution flashed through my mind, the only advantage the complication of *l'heure belge* and *l'heure allemande* had ever presented; one o'clock by the Governor-General's time was noon by the Burgomaster's, and:

"Present my compliments to His Excellency and say that I accept with pleasure," I said.

Trois-Fontaines is, as perhaps I have made clear somewhere in this long narrative, on the other side of Vilvorde, ten miles from Brussels; I consulted Eugène; he said he could drive it in fifteen minutes—perhaps in less. . . . My wife was to go to the Burgomaster's and explain that I had been sent for by the Governor-General.

At five minutes before one o'clock, German time, I was halted

by a balking ass on the bridge at Vilvorde; a great crowd of laughing peasants tried to persuade him to make way, but he was obstinate; finally the men picked him up bodily and set him to one side, and at one o'clock I drove into the great park at Trois-Fontaines, past the lodge where the squadron of Imperial Guards, muffled in greatcoats, were sitting their horses there in the wind that blew out the horses' tails, and a moment later I was received by the Governor-General and the Baroness von Bissing.

The old Governor-General was feeble and haggard and looked much older; he walked stiffly and with difficulty, but he and the frail little Baroness smiled and received me cordially. They had a young son, a lad of fifteen, wearing the cadet uniform of some military training school, and already clicking his heels with a sharp report and saluting with the best of them. Count Ortenberg and several other members of the General's staff were there, and two guests, one of whom it was whispered to me was a great doctor of divinity and famous German theologian, whose name I did not learn. He was an enormous superman with a bristling, belligerent pompadour, great spectacles, high yawning collar, a frock coat that widened gradually from his narrow shoulders to its wide skirts below, the whole terminating at the floor in boots with glistening patent leather tips. The famous theologian was seated at the Baroness's right at luncheon, and I at her left, the Governor-General in the seat opposite his wife. The luncheon was the modest repast served always at that table, and the talk was not animated. Once during the meal the Governor-General lifted his glass and solemnly drank to my health; and once he looked up and said, in his heavy vocie:

"*Vous partez, donc?*"

"*Oui, Excellence,*" I said.

And then in a kind of rage he almost roared:

"*Et pourquoi?*"

As who should say, "What nonsense for you to go to war!" He said that he was sorry to see me go, that the *ravitaillement* would not go on so well.

And that was about all; the Baroness said she regretted the necessity for the submarine war, but that the English would never learn otherwise.

I was glad when the luncheon was over and glad that the

coffee and cigarettes were served at the table. When we arose the Governor-General, as we chatted for a moment, said that he knew how hurried I was, and I took advantage of the remark to make my compliments and adieux at once. The famous theologian left, too, immediately after me, and as I went out of the hall I saw him drop to one knee before the Governor-General, the representative of the Imperial power and majesty, and heard the concussion of the loud moist kiss which the reverend one planted on the hand of His Excellency.

We raced back to town and I arrived at the Burgomaster's just after they had sàt down to table, and sighed with relief to be among my good friends once more—and did my diplomatic best to eat another luncheon.

Villalobar came to us at half-past four that afternoon, and he and my wife and I had tea together in the sadness of those last moments. His motor, with the pretty red-and-yellow flag, the colours thenceforth to fly over the American Legation, was at the door to take us to the Gare du Nord; the motor of the Dutch Legation, with its orange flag, was there as well; and presently, bidding good-bye to the servants who had been so faithful during those trying days, we drove away from the Legation amid their tears. . . .

In the Place Rogier, at the entrance to the Gare du Nord, a great crowd was gathered, a crowd that filled all the space within the station. There had been, of course, no public announcement of our going, the hour was not known, yet the word had gone about in Brussels. And there outside, and in larger numbers inside, the crowd stood in silence. As we left the motors to enter the station the men gravely uncovered, and the women were in tears. It was very still; there was not a word, not a sound. I went through the crowd; now and then a child was held out to me, its little hand outstretched, and low voices beside said:

"*Au revoir—et bientôt.*"

The crowd was massed inside the station, and the words were repeated over and over in that most affectionate and touching of farewells:

"*Au revoir—et bientôt.*"

All our friends were there, come to bid us good-bye, and friends of the members of the C.R.B., all the remaining members of the diplomatic corps, the city officials, representatives of the

Comité National; and when old M. Solvay, his eyes filled with tears, and M. Francqui and M. Emmanuel Janssen came together to shake my hand—I could no longer speak.

Mr. Prentiss Gray, who had not only courageously volunteered to remain, but had insisted on remaining, to instruct the new delegates and to install his successor, was there to see us off.

The long train was drawn up under the sheds. Count von Moltke himself was at the turnstile; Baron von Falkenhausen, who was to escort us across Germany to the Swiss frontier at Schaffhausen, was there; we went out on to the platform.

Then the long farewells and the banalities with which the last moments are filled; finally the men of the C.R.B., the Consuls, the Chinese, got aboard. The masses of flowers were carried into the coach. Then some one said that Josse Allard was there, that he could not get through the stile. I ran back, caught his eager face in the crowd, waved to him, and the crowd cheered. It was the only sound they had made, and, for their sakes, fearing a demonstration, I hastily withdrew and ran back to the carriage. I bade Lambert and then, the last, Villalobar good-bye. He presented my wife with the bouquet of forget-me-nots he had brought, and handed her into the coach. The Baron von Falkenhausen mounted the steps; Von Moltke, who had been so kind, who had so admirably made all the perfect arrangements, stood at the salute. I climbed aboard. The train was moving.

As we drew out of the city I looked out of the window of our coach. Far across the expanse of rails, at the end of a street which came down to the edge of the wide way, at the barrier of a grade crossing in Schaerbeek, a great crowd was gathered, and as the train passed, above the mass of faces blurred by the distance, there burst a white cloud of fluttered handkerchiefs. . . .

I went into a compartment alone and shut the door.

THE END

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PRINTED AT
THE COMPLETE PRESS
WEST NORWOOD
LONDON

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on 15 October, 2018